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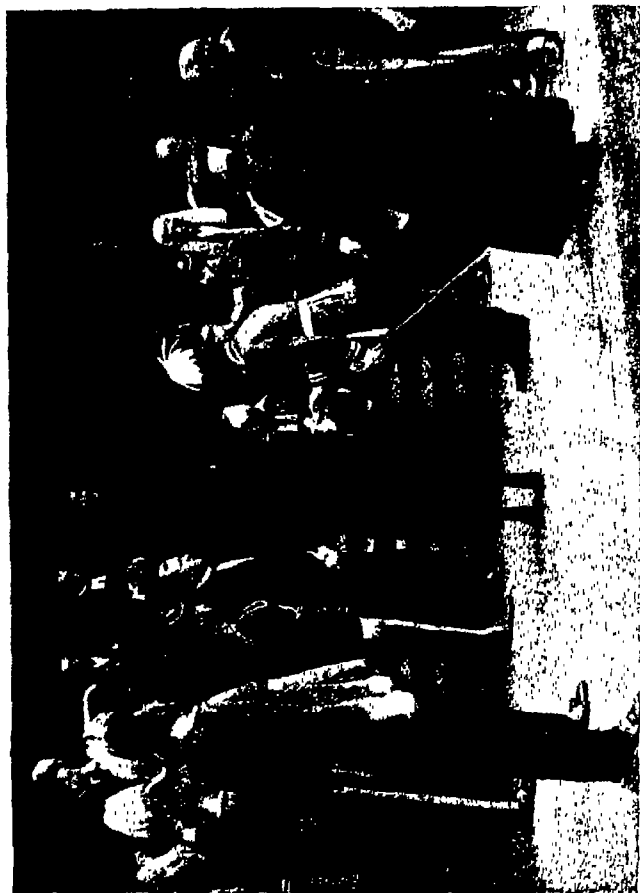
MODERN IRELAND

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LITTLE ARTHUR'S HISTORY
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The Scotsman

AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

MODERN SCOTLAND

AS SEEN BY AN ENGLISHWOMAN

By

CICELY HAMILTON

WITH 16 PAGES OF
PHOTOGRAPHS

LONDON

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Made in Great Britain
at The Temple Press Leitchworth
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J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.
Aldine House Bedford St. London
First Published 1937

Durgam Chauri Municipal Library,

Hyderabad.

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Class No, (विभाग) 941

Book No, (पुस्तक) H. 20. 21

Received On. 24. 11. 37

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FOREWORD

THE title *Modern Scotland* is perhaps too comprehensive, suggesting a completeness of survey to which this book makes no pretension. On the contrary, in planning it, I limited myself of set purpose to certain aspects of the national life and conditions; those aspects, namely, which do not, as a rule, attract the attention of a visitor to the country and to which the author who writes descriptively of Scotland will devote but few of his pages. It is more than possible that, to Scottish eyes, these limitations may produce a lopsided effect; there are Scots, it may be, who will consider that I have given too much space and importance to the Nationalist movement; but in this instance, as in others, I have written with a view to the uninformed English reader rather than the Scot informed; and to the ordinary English reader, Scottish Nationalism is not yet much more than a name. He has not, at any rate, devoted much thought to its origins, its growth, and possible future developments.

For the same reason—because its extent is not realized in England—I have dealt at some length with Irish migration to industrial Scotland and its social and economic consequences; one of those consequences being the increasing spread of Roman Catholicism in a country which the ordinary Englishman still believes to be wholly Calvinistic as regards religious teaching. And if I have devoted less attention to Edinburgh than I have

to Glasgow, this comparative neglect of the Scottish capital is due to the fact that the Southron (unless he be a business man with connections on the Clyde) knows far less of Glasgow than of Edinburgh. The material realities of a nation's life are always difficult of discernment by the stranger—and perhaps in Scotland more difficult than elsewhere, since between the stranger and material realities hangs a veil of legend and romance. Far be it from me to deny that legend and romance are realities, which have sometimes been of more importance to a people than the bread it puts into its mouth; but in Scotland of the stranger they are bound to be stressed to the detriment of other realities. . . . Near as we English are to Scotland, there are aspects of her national life and thought of which we know curiously little.

.

Much help has been given me in the making of this book, and if I do not set down the names of all those to whom I owe a debt for aid received, it is because the list would be formidable; but my special thanks are due to Mr. R. D. Macleod of the Glasgow P.E.N., because through him I made other and most helpful acquaintance. My opinions and errors—which doubtless are numerous—are my own; but such merit and accuracy as these pages possess are due, in great part, to the many kindly Scots who have grudged me neither time nor information.

C. H.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Extracts from the following pages have appeared in *Time and Tide* and *The Yorkshire Post* to whose editors the author wishes to make the customary acknowledgments.

I. CONTRASTS AND EXTREMES

IF I were asked to state, in as few words as possible, in what the main difference between Scotland and England consists, I should put it that Scotland is a land of greater contrasts and extremes. That is obviously the case with regard to the formation of the country; its grouping of highlands and lowlands, and the lie of its mineral deposits; but it is also the case with regard to the temper and outlook of a people who are more vehement when roused, more logical, and therefore less given to compromise, than their neighbours south of the Border. (And, whether they admit it or whether they deny, a good deal more sentimental—as witness the cult of Burns and the Forty-Five!) . . . Scotland is a country where tradition endures as it rarely does in England, and men are strongly conscious of being the sons of their fathers; and where, on the other hand, subversive doctrine spreads vigorously and red is often redder than elsewhere. A country of Nationalism inspired by a Scottish past, and of Internationalism inspired by a Russian present. When it comes to social conditions, the huddled overcrowding of its slums is, by common consent, far worse than the slum life of England; in contrast, it has land—wide tracts of it—that once supported men, now turned over to deer, and the pleasure of the sportsman and the tourist. There, what is often extreme of isolation stands over against the swarming life of the industrial Lowlands; a region of mine and

factory and shipyard containing an agglomeration of human beings which—in proportion to total population—is greater than anything England has to show. In this region—the mineral belt between Forth and Clyde—is concentrated some half the population of the country; while the Highlands (containing more than half Scotland's area) have a population of less than four hundred thousand.¹ Old habits of living and of thought may be passing, but they are still a conscious influence in the national life, fostered by the long racial memory and sense of times past that is part of the heritage of Celtic blood, as well as by the isolation of many parts of the country. A Highland gentleman, by no means patriarchal, once told me that, in his remoter Scotland, a feudal system, in fact if not in law, had endured to his own younger day.

As history goes, it is a very brief period—a few generations—that has elapsed since the coming of our servant and master, the Machine; but in that brief period few parts of the world—none that call themselves civilized—have escaped change, more or less drastic; and in the case of Scotland the change had been drastic indeed. With regard to the transformation wrought by industrialism in the life of a community, it would not, I think, be incorrect to say that Scotland is an object-lesson more striking than any other European country, more striking certainly than her neighbour England. For in Scotland, for various reasons—geographical, political, psychological, commercial—the migrations and upheavals brought about by the Machine Age were more

¹ This is less than a twelfth of Scotland's near five million, and works out at less than three persons per square mile.

violent and thoroughgoing than similar movements in England or other parts of Europe. Wherever industrialism has established itself, and its factory system, the town, inevitably, has become the factor of supreme importance in the body politic, the factor to whose needs and progress all other interests are subordinate; inevitably, therefore, the tendency under the industrialist régime is to neglect the interests of the man who makes his living on the land—and nowhere has that tendency been more in evidence than in Scotland. So long as the shipyards of the Clyde were busy, and the mineral wealth of the Lowlands was increasing and finding its markets; so long as the blast furnaces of Lanarkshire were flaring to the heavens, and the factories of Glasgow and Paisley were getting their orders; so long as that prosperous state of things endured, it was a matter of indifference to commercial Scotland—and, even more so, to commercial England—that land in the north was going out of cultivation and that sheep and deer were replacing the tiller of the soil.

When the eighteenth century came to an end, the Age of the Machine was already well on its way; the Watts and the Arkwrights had given their inventions to the world—and thereby started a revolution which in reality was far more momentous than the political upheaval of the same century which had overthrown French monarchy and lit the torch of war throughout Europe. But when the eighteenth century came to its end, the meaning and future extent of that revolution were as yet unsuspected by those whose lives it was moulding; save here and there, in little pockets and districts, Scotland, economically, was much what she had always

been. A country, that is to say, where the interests of the land were not as yet subordinate to those of centralized industry; she possessed, indeed, only four towns of more than 'county' size, and not one of the four attained to wen-like proportions. What is now the second city of the Empire—Glasgow—containing well over a million of close-packed inhabitants, was in those days growing, but not yet overgrown—its population numbering no more than eighty thousand.

In adjacent counties coal was being mined and iron smelted; from the yards of the Clyde ships were being launched; but so far the ships moved by grace of wind, not by power of steam, and the shafts and blast furnaces had not, as yet, made the valley of the Clyde their own. Textile industries had come into being in Glasgow and Paisley and Lanark—with cotton-spinning, muslin-weaving, thread-making, and calico printing; and even by the end of the eighteenth century the factory system, young though it was, had already introduced its abuses. As factories were built and mills were installed, their proprietors called for more labour; which came, without power of imposing conditions, to work for low wages and overpeople the slums. (As an instance, when new cotton mills were opened at Lanark, the necessary labour to run the machines could not be supplied in the district, so poor children were sent over from Edinburgh.) The Forth and Clyde canal had opened a passage whereby the growing industries of western Scotland could export their products directly to the Continent; it was on the canal that the first commercial steamboat plied—the *Charlotte Dundas*, launched in 1801. Further, there had been considerable improvement in

the Scottish road-system, brought about by the growing needs of internal trade. Scotland, in short, had set her foot firmly on the path of industrialism; a path that, as the nineteenth century advanced, was to lead to undreamed-of activities in work and trade, and an increase in wealth that would have seemed fabulous to the elder Scotland of the handworker, the clansman, and the Covenanter.

And so modern Scotland came into being, and for several generations—all the nineteenth century—made progress in commerce and industry and was one of the world's main workshops. While, side by side with mechanized progress, there endured, with a vigour that had passed from England, the tradition of a pre-industrial era and life as it was lived before Watt ever pondered a steam-kettle.

One of the differences between industrial Scotland and industrial England is Scotland's greater degree of concentration. South of the Tweed there are numerous mining and manufacturing regions: the Lancashire district, a stretch of south-west Yorkshire; Tyneside, and part of the neighbouring Durham; the Black Country, Birmingham and Coventry and Oxford; the South Wales coal-field; London and its growing environs. But north of the Tweed—and this is one of Scotland's problems—there is one supreme industrial region, centred on the valley of the Clyde. There are outposts of the region found as far east as the Lothians; the mines of Tranent, outside Edinburgh, were working when Prince Charlie marched south—before the day of Lanarkshire industrialism; but the main body of Lowland industry is concentrated in the district that William Power (I think it is)

has aptly christened Glasgovia. For the rest of the country there are two or three spots—not much more than that—to be marked on the industrial map. Aberdeen stands for the granite which she quarries for export as well as for her own grey building; and likewise runs out her fish trains, laden with the produce of a trawling fleet. Dundee's chief industry is the manufacture of jute. There is a mining district in Fife, and the towns of the Border have their tweed mills. A glance at the map shows the Highland north and west as a region all but townless, and therefore lacking in the industry that attracts and holds population. As has been said, something like one-half of the inhabitants of Scotland are collected into one district; and to be noted further concerning that district that it is the racial melting-pot of modern Scotland—into its mines and factories and shipyards have been thrown all sorts and conditions of human raw material. Not only the Saxon from the Border and the Gael from the North, but the continental immigrant in search of a wage and the Irishman—above all, the Irishman! Here, then, is developing a new species of Scot whose outlook and characteristics will not be those of men subject to purely Scottish influence.

We of the south are often dismayed—and rightly—at the size of our Great Wen of London. Dismayed, of late, at its overgrown helplessness in face of the air peril and also, less urgently, at the arterial roads which disfigure what once was a countryside; at the 'Tudor' estates that have hidden for ever the paths and trackways which were ancient usage when Caesar's galleys set out from Gaul to make for the coast of Kent. We are dismayed—and rightly—at the thought that in

London and its outskirts and dormitory towns there is accumulated more than a fifth of the entire population of England and Wales. But if London and its outskirts and dormitory towns were populated, in proportion to the rest of England and Wales, in the same ratio as Glasgovia to the rest of Scotland, then we should have an agglomeration of far more than a fifth of our people in London itself, and something between eighteen and twenty millions in London and its environs of the lower Thames Valley and the Home Counties—the population of all the rest of the country being comparatively reduced. To push the analogy further: if our population were distributed like the Scottish, in addition to the London-Home Counties wen, there would be, in the whole of England and Wales, only three other considerable centres. One, the equivalent of Edinburgh and its suburbs, would be rather more than considerable, since it would contain an accumulation of near four million of inhabitants. The other two—a southern Aberdeen and Dundee, say Liverpool and Cardiff—would number, in the one case, a population of some thirteen hundred thousand, in the other of fourteen hundred. Our other large centres of population—Manchester and its satellites, Newcastle and its neighbouring Tyneside—our Leeds and our Sheffield, our Bristol and Nottingham and Hull—these separate industrial neighbourhoods have no counterpart in the northern half of the realm. That part of Scotland's urban population which does not inhabit the four districts above mentioned lives in towns of the small or provincial type; towns which, for the most part, have not increased in size or population of late. A list in a book of reference of the score of

Scottish towns which come first in the matter of population is headed, of course, by Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen; looking down the other sixteen on the list, I noted that ten among them were names of towns situated in the Clyde Valley—that is to say, they form part of the urban system which is centred on the port and clearing-house of Glasgow. Of the other six mentioned in the list, one is Falkirk, also a town of the industrial belt though not in the region of the Clyde; Kirkcaldy, a port of the Fifeshire coal district, is another; and the tale is completed by Dunfermline (city of the Carnegie Trust), and the county capitals of Perth and Stirling and Dumfries. Here again it is only necessary to glance at a map to realize how closely set are most of the important towns of Scotland, and how clear and sharp is the dividing line between the crowded industrial and the isolated Highland rural. . . . The absence of towns in the mountainous north and west, in part, no doubt, is due to the fact that they are mountainous—but not to that fact alone; in regions of Europe to the full as mountainous as the Scottish Highlands there are cities and towns of long standing, as the Alps and the Apennines bear witness. Something must be put to the credit or debit of the Gael; whose tradition, whether on mountain or plain, was not that of a builder of cities. Ireland has her plains as well as her mountains, and the Irish Gael (blood-brother to the Scottish) could have built on excellent sites had he wished; but no town or city was built in Ireland till a foreign invader, the Norseman, set to work.

.

At the taking of the last census in 1931 the total population of the Kingdom of Scotland was, to be exact, 4,842,554, a figure which represents an actual fall since the previous census. The fall is not sensational—less than forty thousand—and is to be accounted for probably by the drain of emigration; but it has to be remembered that during the period in which it occurred the stream of immigration from Ireland continued as usual. If it were not for the Irish colony—(which in the Glasgow region is said to number as many as six hundred thousand, Irish-born and of Irish extraction)—if it were not for the presence of that colony, it is more than probable that the last census figures would show a much heavier decrease in the number of Scotland's inhabitants. For the Irish colony, like all communities with a low standard of comfort, increases not only by immigration, but by a birth-rate considerably higher than that of its neighbours and other contemporaries who make higher demands upon life.

Scots, for many generations now, have been an emigrating race—a fact of importance to more than the country they left. Sometimes the emigration has been voluntary, sometimes a matter of compulsion so harsh as to be almost incredible; part of its stream has been directed into England and there absorbed, part, more distantly, to countries overseas. The flow of the stream has varied with the years, the seasons of prosperity or adversity, but has never entirely ceased. Once, in the Highlands, when I stood to look at a local war memorial, a companion pointed out to me that several of the names engraven on the stone were those of men who, although born in the district, had served and died with Canadian

regiments. In other war memorials, I was told, I should find the same thing; there were many born Scots in the Canadian forces, young men who had crossed the Atlantic in the years immediately preceding the War; years in which the stream of emigration from Scotland swelled to more than a stream—to a spate.

In addition to migration to regions outside Scotland, there has been the migration in Scotland itself; the townward drift which is an inevitable result of the substitution of factory for domestic industry. The same substitution was taking place, with varying degrees of speed and thoroughness, in all parts of the civilized world; but there were reasons why the accompanying trek to the towns should be more general in Scotland than elsewhere—even than in England. For there was a period of decades—many decades—when the Highland peasant was not only being lured to the town by its call for labour; he was being thrust out of his croft by his landlord to make room for the profitable sheep. The epoch of a growing industrialism in the Lowlands was also the epoch of evictions in the Highland glens—the wholesale evictions which history knows as the Clearances. Although at the opening year of the nineteenth century these causes were already at work, thirty-one per cent of the country's population—that is to say, well over half a million—were still engaged in some form of work on the land; while at the expiration of the nineteenth century, though the population was nearly three times as great, the number had sunk to about two hundred thousand—and that was by no means the end of the exodus. Realization of the unwelcome fact that Scotland can no longer hope to recover her former

pre-eminence in the markets of the world has meant a certain amount of official effort to stem the drift to the towns and repopulate the Highland glens—and likewise agitation on the part of patriotic Highlanders. But, as more than Scotland has had to realize, it is one thing to clear a country of its landworkers and another to bring them back; since the peasant, like the poet, is born.

II. THE SECOND CITY OF THE EMPIRE

To the ordinary visitor from England on holiday bent Glasgow, the second city of the Empire, makes no particular appeal; he breaks his journey there—or does not break it—but, save as a temporary halting-place, it is not often entered on his map. It has none of the romance or spectacular attraction of Edinburgh; where Princes Street provides pictorial effects and suggestions of the past, the main thoroughfares of Glasgow have little to offer but their shops. Very good shops and in some ways preferable to those of Princes Street; not so many windows showing odious little tartan souvenirs—tea-coseys in hunting Stewart and the like—but all the same shops, just shops! Though the city is of more than respectable antiquity, it has not much to exhibit in the way of ancient building; in the nineteenth century, when its growth was rapid, many of the older streets were cleared to make room for offices and warehouses. Of mediæval Glasgow there remains little beside the noble cathedral of St. Mungo which, more fortunate than many Scottish churches, escaped the iconoclastic rage of the Reformer; and an adjacent building, known as Provand's Lordship, which (by local legend, at any rate) once gave lodging to Mary, Queen of Scots. If so, she lodged there in fateful days, when the crisis of her life was close at hand; when Darnley, sick in Glasgow, was recovering to no purpose, since (with or with-

out the Queen's connivance) the manner of his death was being planned.

The tourist making his first visit is unlikely to be struck by the beauty of Glasgow; on the contrary, he will probably be astonished to learn that, something under two centuries ago, it was described by Smollett as 'The Pride of Scotland,' a town which 'might pass for an elegant and flourishing city in any part of Christendom.' Smollett, as a native of Glasgow, may have been somewhat biased by local patriotism; but that was not the case with the author of *Robinson Crusoe* who, earlier in the century, had written of it with enthusiasm as 'the beautifullest little city I have seen in Britain.' There is interest in Glasgow of to-day, much interest, and in the older residential quarters there are solid squares and terraces, built as habitations for a past generation of solid commercial men: good to look at, these, more especially the work of that original genius, 'Greek' Thomson, who adapted the classical to modern needs with a skill entirely his own. But in spite of 'Greek' Thomson and the older residential districts, the verdict on Glasgow will probably be that (save in rare instances) beauty must be sought beyond its borders—in its background of mountain and the lower reaches of its Clyde. In the age of Smollett and Defoe, no doubt, the city had a charm of its own, as distinct from background; a charm of building and immediate surrounding that Progress, having no use for, swept out of its path on to the dustheap. But though industrial progress in the nineteenth century set its sheds and its slums on the banks of the Clyde; though it turned the white river-mist grey with the reek from its chimneys;

yet it could not deprive the citizen of Glasgow of his neighbourhood of hill, loch, and sea. On the contrary, as compensation for loss of other beauties, it has brought him nearer to hill, loch, and sea by providing him with swift means of transport.

Glasgow is the second city of the empire for the reason that she stands on the River Clyde, and has most of the mineral wealth of Scotland lying within reach of easy transport. But if the Clyde has made Glasgow, Glasgow has also made the Clyde; which, when it flowed as Nature intended it to flow, was not a river to carry Cunarders and battleships. On the contrary, until it was taken in hand by the dredger, its channel was tortuous, winding between sandbanks, and its stream so shallow that it could be forded half-way between the city and the sea; that is to say, more than ten miles below Glasgow. So, shallow and tortuous, it remained for centuries—the cargoes of sea-going ships being landed and loaded at Port Glasgow, near Greenock; and it was not until 1740 that a first attempt was made to deepen the channel that gave access to the Firth and the sea; in that year it was agreed by those who held the purse 'to go to the length of £100 sterling of charges thereupon.' Even taking into account the superior value of money in the eighteenth century, the amount does not strike one as adequate for the dredging of a river of the size and volume of the Clyde, and it is not surprising that, seventy years later, there was still a good deal to be done. It was in 1812 that a pioneer vessel of steam navigation—Henry Bell's *Comet*, built at Port Glasgow—ran aground five miles below Glasgow Bridge, though she only drew four feet of water. Like

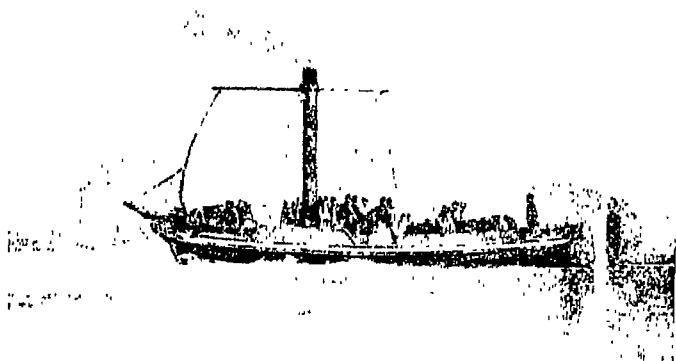
the skippers of the sailing vessels known as 'Margate hoys,' who, by devious tacking in the reaches of the Thames, used to spin out the voyage from London to Margate, the skippers of the early Glasgow steamboats were reputed, now and then, to strand their vessels of set purpose. The object being the same in both instances: to cater at a highly profitable rate for passengers in need of food and drink and unable to land and obtain them.

Here be it noted that steam navigation in the British Isles owes much to the public spirit of Glasgow citizens: the *Book of Glasgow*, published a few years ago by the City's Corporation, recalls the fact that it was the Clyde Trustees who 'stood practically alone in granting Henry Bell an annuity of £100 in 1812 to support and encourage him in his development of steam navigation.' The *Book* goes on to draw a contrast between the Clyde commerce of his day and of ours. Could Henry Bell but return to earth and revisit the scene of his work and triumph, 'In place of his little *Comet*, only 43 feet in length and of 30 tons burden and 3 h.p., he would see ocean-going leviathans passing up and down what has now become a world-renowned waterway, carrying produce and merchandise to and from all parts of the world. Within a mile of where the *Comet* grounded, he would view the river where . . . one of the largest warships in the world—the *Hood*—was launched in 1918; and where, in the near future, will be launched the giant Cunarder of over 1,000 feet in length. . . . ' (This, of course, refers to the *Queen Mary*, in course of construction when the *Book of Glasgow* was published.) This wonderful transformation and

progress in converting a mere stream into a great navigable waterway, linking up Glasgow with every quarter of the globe, has been made possible by the steam dredger. . . . A capital expenditure of £2,000,000 has been incurred in widening, deepening, and straightening the river, and the average annual cost of maintenance dredging now totals approximately £58,000.'

Whatever the Act of Union may have meant to the rest of Scotland, Glasgow and her merchants had cause to rejoice at it; for union with England meant liberty to trade with England's American colonies, and it was this westward trade with Virginia and Maryland that made Glasgow a commercial city of the first importance. So long as all, or nearly all, the sea-borne trade of Scotland was carried on with the continent of Europe, it was carried on through east coast ports and Glasgow had small share of it; but so soon as the Clyde was a gateway to America, the position was reversed, and the day of Glasgow began.

Like Bristol, she flourished on tobacco, its import and re-export; the merchants who prospered in the trade were known as 'tobacco lords'—a title justified by their wealth which, for those days, was often enormous. Interesting to note that these tobacco lords, in the heyday of the trade, adopted a distinctive uniform of scarlet cloak which, though it may have been a sign of sinful pride, must have brightened up the Glasgow streets. For more than half a century the city flourished exceedingly—and then came the American War of Independence, with slump and disaster in its train. The revolting colonies owed a million to Glasgow—the equivalent of many times a million of our money



J. Scott

124 YEARS AFTER

Above—Henry Bell's Comet passing Dumbarton Rock in 1812, from a lithograph in the Glasgow Art Galleries.

Below—Queen Mary leaving the Clyde in May 1936.

—and the day of the scarlet-cloaked tobacco lords was over. By 1778 the trade of the whole country had fallen to less than half its pre-war amount, and in Glasgow the fall was still greater. But lost though it was, the tobacco trade had made Glasgow a port, and the disaster of its collapse was followed in time by renewed prosperity as new industries grew up and developed. The coming of steam meant a demand for machinery and the coming of the steamship, the development of marine engineering. 'The fame that the Clyde yards had won for their sailing-ships was transferred to steamships. In the 'forties the new Cunard Company gave the first notable stimulus to the industry with several large orders. As steel replaced iron and screw replaced paddle the Clyde yards grew and multiplied; every circumstance was in favour of swift development; a native talent for heavy engineering and convenient natural resources—iron, coal, a great waterway—coincided. By the end of the century the Clyde was the greatest shipbuilding area in the world.'¹ . . . And shipbuilding was only one of the trades that the Industrial Revolution brought into being in the neighbourhood of iron, coal, and waterway; and, by so doing, settled half the population of Scotland in and around the valley of the Clyde—and filled and over-filled the Glasgow slums.

Of the Glasgow slums I have treated in another chapter; all I need say on this present page is that the city is dealing with the problem—its heritage of ill from an epoch of reckless industrialism. Another heritage from that epoch, no doubt, is the stunted growth of so many

¹ George Malcolm Thomson, *A Short History of Scotland*.

of Glasgow's citizens; I was present, on one occasion, at a march past of Glasgow Territorial regiments, and what struck me in numbers of the men who marched was their height—or rather their lack of it. Row after row of undersized little fellows, who could hardly have touched the five-foot mark. With, one must conclude, others in the background who are even less imposing—for, after all, there is a standard for the Territorial recruit. Having seen that march past, it did not astonish me to read, soon after, that a hundred years ago the height standard for recruits for Scottish regiments was five foot six but that, by the end of the nineteenth century, it had dropped to five foot two.

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Round Edinburgh there centres not only the story of Scotland's kings but much of Scotland's romance and tradition of culture; it has the hereditary pride of a capital city and a dignity of Georgian street and of Castle Rock that Glasgow cannot hope to rival. But all the same it is from Glasgow, and not from Edinburgh, that Scotland, nowadays, gets most of her literary and artistic stimulus; a woman journalist whom I met in Glasgow first drew my attention to the fact—for fact it is. In the pre-war period it was Glasgow, and not Edinburgh, that produced its School—'the most notable group of Scots painters since Raeburn and Wilkie.' And the Glasgow School was not an isolated phenomenon, an oasis surrounded by indifference; the city by the Clyde bred its patrons as well as its painters and was rightly proud of its reputation as an art centre. (There must be some close connection between com-

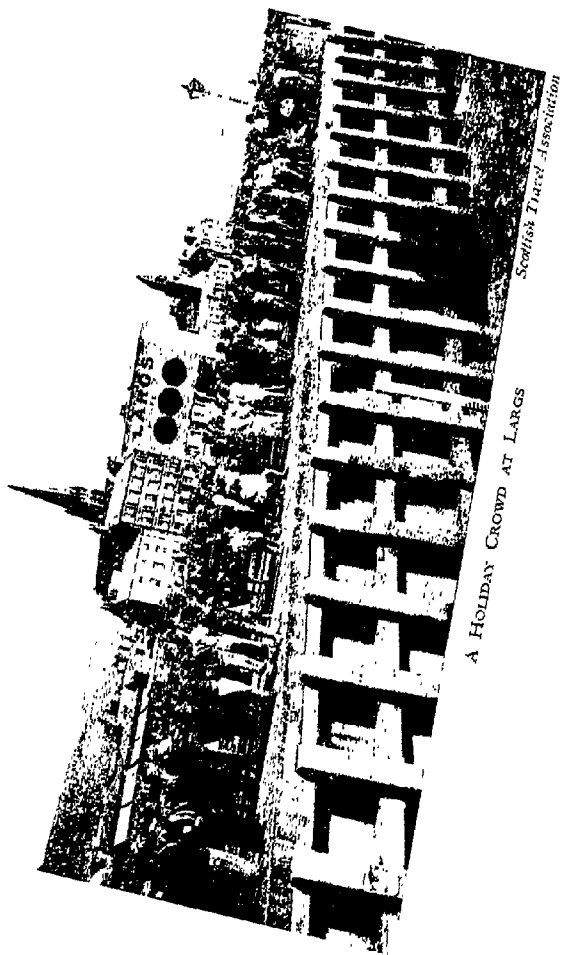
merce and the art of painting—the two have so often flourished in company. In the cities of Flanders—Ghent, Antwerp, Bruges; in the Netherlands; in Venice—to take only a few examples.) With the War and its aftermath, the painter, everywhere, fell on difficult days, and not only because of the poverty, or comparative poverty, of the class that once bought and commissioned his pictures—the new ways of living in themselves were adverse to his art. In the modern flat or maisonnette there is no room for the full-length portrait or the framed landscape that once furnished the wall in a spacious dining-room or drawing-room; and even if place could be found for a canvas, the chances are that its potential purchaser would prefer to spend his money on the latest make of car. An age whose first interest is speed and its development will hardly be an age of great painting; which is an art that appeals to the sedentary rather than to men in a hurry. But if the Glasgow School of painting is of yesterday rather than to-day, Glasgow as a literary centre is alive and very much alive; my friend the journalist quoted instance after instance to prove its superiority to modern Edinburgh as a source of literary inspiration. The reason she gave for this superiority was interesting; Glasgow, she said, was the meeting- and mingling-place of the two strains, Highland and Lowland; the Gael, dispossessed or merely desirous of bettering his fortunes, had migrated to its industries as he had never migrated to Edinburgh. You would see the kilt in Edinburgh far oftener than you saw it on the Glasgow streets, but that was a matter of local cult and fashion—the Highland blood was in Glasgow and often, too, the Highland

voice. (It may be that some quality in the Highland voice is a factor in the singing of the Orpheus Choir which, in the thirty years of its existence, has set a high standard for choral song and carried the fame of musical Glasgow over Scotland and beyond her borders. As for music in general, it has been said that [with the possible exception of Manchester] Glasgow hears more good music than any other provincial town in Britain.) I found this theory with regard to the mingling of races the more interesting because I had once been told by a professor at one of the Welsh universities that investigations over a course of years had shown that their highest average of intelligent students was among natives of the Welsh border district; a district, that is to say, where the blood of the Saxon was mingled with that of the Celt. And while this book was in the writing, in *The Glory of Scotland*, by J. J. Bell, I came across the following passage:

'In a one-room dwelling (at Blantyre) in 1813 was born David, afterwards Doctor, Livingstone. His father was a Highlander—a Jacobite ancestor fell at Culloden; his mother was a Lowlander with the blood of Covenanters; and it was the two distinct strains that gave Scotland one of her really great men.'

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If you live in the west, with mountains as your neighbours, you must expect something extra in the way of rain and—no denying it—the macintosh is frequent wear in Glasgow; but a little extra in the way of rain is a small price to pay, a very small price, for holiday pleasures of sea and island, of hill and loch,



A HOLIDAY CROWD AT LARGS

Scottish Tharrel Association

such as no other city in Great Britain can command. Those who love solitude, when time is their own, can attain it both cheaply and swiftly; while for the gregarious majority there is plenty of provision, alike on the mainland and the island resorts of the Firth. Largs, on the Ayrshire coast, is Glasgow's equivalent of Margate or Southend; described by the guide-book as 'popular and progressive,' it can be reached by motor bus, by train, or by boat down the Clyde; and the crowds who visit it in the season find there all requisites for gregarious summer enjoyment. And find there, also, a loveliness of outlook over mountain and sea denied to Margate and Southend; Arran and Bute and the Firth of Clyde, and the hills of Argyll to the north. . . . If I knew a stranger who was about to cross the Atlantic and set foot in Great Britain for the first time, I think I should dissuade him, and dissuade him hard, from taking a liner bound for Glasgow; for if the day were fair when he voyaged up the Firth—past the Mull and the islands, past Loch Long, the Gareloch, and the Rock of Dumbarton—he would be likely to expect a land all splendour and (hoping too much) what followed would be tame and disappointing. 'At other big ports'—so writes William Power—'one creeps out of dock into the open sea; or crawls half blindly, amid hootings and shoutings, down a long reach of dirty water between low misty shores, whose disappearance and the quickening of the propeller are the only signs that one has reached the sea. But here, after Glasgow harbour is cleared, the humblest tramp has a day of glorious cruising. . . .' There cannot be many rivers in the world to beat the Clyde for beauty, as it turns and widens

to the sea; if you stay on the right bank, at Cardross or Helensburgh, you can look out after dark at the lights of Greenock starring the opposite hillside; and if you stay at Greenock, you can look by day to the hills that stand above Loch Lomond. In neither case a sight to be turned from with indifference.

Greenock and Gourock run into each other, and somewhere about the point where they merge is a factory that nowadays must be working full time, a factory where they turn out torpedoes; in Loch Long, on the opposite side of the river, you may see from the window of a Highland train the targets where the 'tin fish' are tested. On the Clyde, as elsewhere, rearmament stands for employment and increased prosperity; no use blinking the fact that many are the better for it—if peace has her victories no less renowned than war, she also, like war, has her casualties. . . . At Greenock is a long-established industry for the making of canvas; in the pre-steam era it furnished sails for the tall ships launched on the Clyde. In these mechanized days tall ships have no need of sails and even the fishing-boat discards them for an engine; the diminished demand for maritime canvas comes chiefly from the yacht-owner and the industry has had to find new markets for its wares—one of them being provision of tents for the hiker. It is given to few of us to foresee distant consequence and the effect of our actions on future generations; hence it is unlikely that James Watt, the genius to whom Greenock gave birth, ever thought, as he wrestled with his problem of steam, that an eventual result of his intelligent observation of a spouting kettle would be the disappearance of one of the trades whereby his fellow-

townsmen gained a livelihood. . . . Another of the town's staple industries was sugar-refining; a trade whereby it once prospered exceedingly but which of late has fallen on hard times. As in England, so in Scotland, when you travel through the industrial regions, you are bound to light on evidence of disaster wrought by change in the channels of trade; to hear of industries that once sent their products to the ends of the earth and that now find their markets narrowly restricted, by tariff or by foreign competition. Often enough the explanation given is the progress made in Asia of late years; the mechanical progress of factory and loom, in which the East has been instructed by the West. Goods that were once exported to Asia from our British factories, Asia now makes for herself—and more cheaply. A few miles from Greenock, as the crow flies, is a factory, long-established, for the weaving of red Turkey twill, which is an article much in demand among Asiatic peoples; but the products of that factory are no longer exported to the East in the large and profitable quantities that once supplied that demand. The East has learned how to run its own looms and produce its own red twill; the factories of India, worked by labour that feeds cheaply on a handful of rice, can undersell the exports of a country where a higher standard of living prevails, and wages must conform to the standard. That type of export trade has gone for good, and the manufacturers and wage-earners of Europe must make up their minds to its loss.

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Glasgow's achievements in engineering being what

they are, it is right and fitting that the oldest technical college in the world should be found within the precincts of the city; now entitled the Royal Technical College, it came into being in 1796 as Anderson's University—otherwise 'the Andersonian.' The John Anderson, after whose name it was called, was an eighteenth-century professor of Glasgow University who, among other titles to remembrance, numbered James Watt with his technical students and his friends; and who, at his death, bequeathed all his property 'to the public, for the good of mankind and the advancement of science, in an institution to be denominated "Anderson's University."' The institution was to be opened to students of all classes and likewise—astonishing fact for those days!—to women as well as to men; as the language of an earlier generation expressed it, the Andersonian was 'the first regular institution to admit the fair sex to the temple of knowledge on the same footing with men.' John Anderson's legacy, in the matter of money, was of very small value to the institution; his trustees, when they came to settle his estate, were faced with an actual deficit of two hundred pounds. But his valuable library and a collection of physical apparatus, at that time unequalled, formed the nucleus of the college which the trustees brought into being.

John Anderson's foundation has other claims to notice beside those already mentioned—one of them the fact that it was the first college in Great Britain to open a chemical laboratory for public instruction. And another, that one of its early professors, Dr. George Birkbeck (whose name is commemorated in London in Birkbeck College) 'in the belief that men should be taught the

principles of the arts they practise,' started a technical class for Glasgow workmen. Once started, students, and eager students, were not lacking—they came in their scores and their hundreds; and from the beginnings of that one class, there developed, in time, the Mechanics' Institute, with educational activities extending over England as well as over Scotland. The influence of John Anderson's legacy has not been confined to his own city; it has been of importance to the world outside its borders. In Glasgow itself it has no doubt been a factor in the skill which makes Clyde engineering supreme, and so helped to produce a Clydeside race that take pride in their skill and their creation. A pride that is passed on from artisan father to son; as witness the reply of a Clydeside urchin in an elementary school when favourable comment was made on a specimen of his handiwork. 'You've got neat fingers,' the inspecting visitor remarked; and the youngster's answer came instantly: 'Whit way would I no? when ma father built the *Queen Mary*!'

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Once, talking with an Edinburgh acquaintance, I saw a look of astonishment spread over her face—astonishment so strong as to be almost incredulity—when she heard me speak of Glasgow as a place full of interest. To her, I could see, it was not much more than a commercial centre; an overgrown city, void of interest for those who did not live and work there, because lacking in beauty and romance. Her point of view has its justification; could any doubt it who has ever walked the Royal Mile or raised his eyes from Princes Street

to the Castle? To Edinburgh Heaven has been gracious as to site and man has been generous as to history; and in neither respect can the city on the Clyde compare with the city by the Forth. But if olden Scottish history is written round Edinburgh, Scottish history to-day is more concerned with Glasgow; it is in the Clyde valley and not in Midlothian that many of its hardest problems are being worked out; it is in Glasgow and its neighbourhood of factories and coal-fields that industrialism, plus the flood of immigration, has produced a type of Scot whose outlook and tradition must necessarily differ from that of many of his countrymen. . . . The contrasting interests of races and religions, the clash of political faiths, and the struggle of industrial Scotland to adapt itself to the changing conditions of a harassed and uncertain world—these are matters of moment in Scotland of to-day and the place to learn of them is Glasgow.

III. SLUM AND SLUM CLEARANCE

THE evil fame of the Glasgow slum has spread far beyond the city boundaries; and those who have seen it at its worst, at close quarters, are not likely to challenge the black reputation it has won. There are Russian towns, no doubt, which could produce something considerably less desirable in the way of domicile; but, as far as the British Islands are concerned, the mean street dwellings of the Clydeside district have an unfortunate pre-eminence. Be it noted, however, that, in part at least, this pre-eminence is due to original virtue rather than original sin; in older Glasgow, as in other Scottish towns, the building of houses was a sturdy and durable art; the foundations of these evil-smelling, vermin-ridden rookeries were well and truly laid. They have held together through long generations, standing firm till the pick of the housebreaker assails them, because their walls are of stone and likewise their corkscrew stairways. Even jerry-building has its compensations and advantages, since its products are liable to fall to pieces as time goes on, whereas Glasgow's solid slums have endured to a verminous age.

Durability, however, is not the only reason why the slums of Glasgow are a byword; they are, as elsewhere, one of the legacies of industrial development. In its earlier stages the much-admired development which lit blast furnaces across the northern Lowlands, sank mines,

built docks, created a steel trade; and for decade after decade emptied Highland glens, lured cheap labour from across the Irish Sea and even from the continent of Europe. The process continuing until half of the entire population of the country was clustered into Glasgow and the region round — the Paisleys, Motherwells, Hamiltons, Coatbridges, where was iron and coal and factory chimneys and docks.¹

'Irish immigration, over-rapid development of trade and industry, and the spirit of anti-social greed made Glasgow in the first half of last century a hell of slums, smoke, poverty, and disease.' So one who writes with authority of his native country.² . . . Through year after year of the age of coal and iron and spreading factory the cheap labour that was needy human life came to seek its bread in the Scottish industrial belt; Mr. Thomas Johnston in his *History of the Working Classes in Scotland* gives the number of strangers who swarmed into Clydeside during the first forty years of the nineteenth century at 350,000. The human streams converging on Glasgow were swollen, at that epoch, by the clearance policy of many northern landlords, their substitution of the sheep-run for the croft throughout vast tracks of the Highlands. And (as already said) swollen also by influx from Ireland; emigrants brought over in shiploads. That is an influx which has not yet ceased and which, in addition to cheap labour for her workshops and the making of her roads, has provided

¹ The population of Glasgow itself at the beginning of the eighteenth century was about 12,000; at the beginning of the nineteenth 80,000; at the census of 1931 over 1,100,000.

² William Power.

Scotland in general, and the Clyde region in particular, with some of their thorniest problems. Difficulties—social, religious, industrial—have been imported with the Irish immigrant.

It was the habit of the Machine Age to create the city slum; but, by reason of the special conditions prevailing, its slum-creations on the Clyde were viler than those of other areas. How vile and insanitary may be judged by the fact that there was a time when half the children born in Glasgow died before they reached the age of five. And that infant mortality of industrial Glasgow is hardly to be wondered at when 'the census returns for 1861 showed that one-third of the population of Scotland lived in single-roomed houses, and 7,964 of these houses had no window. . . .'¹ (The word house, be it remarked, in Scotland signifies any kind of dwelling; a flat is a house, however small.) It may give some idea of Scotland's unfortunate pre-eminence in the matter of bad housing to record that, in the year 1911, forty-seven per cent of the Scottish people were living in houses of one or two rooms; the proportion so living south of the Tweed being only seven per cent.

¹ *History of the Working Classes in Scotland*. Another authority, Dr. A. K. Chalmers in his volume on *The Health of Glasgow 1818-1925*, points out that 'between 1821 and 1841 the expectation of life at ten years of age had actually fallen by about five years, and the loss was not regained until some fifty years later when the slum clearances of the "seventies" removed many of the more insanitary dwellings which in previous years had earned notoriety as the haunts of poverty, dirt, disease, and crime.' . . . There can be little doubt that Scotland's high average of crime and illegitimacy (as compared with England) is due, in part at least, to bad housing.

By courtesy of officials of the Public Health Department I was guided to one or two of Glasgow's notoriously insanitary streets and introduced into several of their typical dwellings. All the tenants, when questioned, confessed cheerfully to bugs and, judging by the state of some of the woodwork, rats were no strangers to their domiciles. Needless to say, these prize specimens of Glasgow slumdom had been condemned by the sanitary authority; their occupants, so soon as a clearance scheme was ready to receive them, would move to decent surroundings in the suburbs, and the evil-smelling tenements, left to their vermin, would fall to the pick of the housebreaker. In one domicile we visited, the pick of the housebreaker was already at work farther down the block that contained it; and the occupying family, packed and ready to depart, were only awaiting the arrival of the barrow which would convey their household goods to a new and more sanitary dwelling. Some of their household goods—their bedding—had already been removed by a sanitary inspector; it would be restored, at the new and clean abode, after due disinfection against vermin. Bedding, however, is not the only means of transport for vermin; they can be conveyed from house to house in other articles of furniture as well as in wearing apparel; hence it is the business of local health visitors to keep an eye on migrating families and urge them to special efforts in the way of watchfulness and cleanliness. The office of health visitor in slum and slum-clearance districts must be anything but a sinecure; it stands to reason that men and women who have dwelt for years, perhaps all their lives, in the squalid surroundings of a Glasgow rookery

are likely to need persevering instruction in the arts of domestic cleanliness; and it says much for the health visitor, as well as for the average ex-slum family, that the authors of a report, issued on completion of Glasgow's forty thousandth new house, are able to state that 'the response to the improved environment and better accommodation has been phenomenal, fully ninety per cent of the rehoused tenants in slum areas showing in every way a decided improvement.' The ten per cent residuum, one concludes, must be borne with and, so far as possible, prevented from becoming a nuisance to their cleaner-living neighbours.

One little woman whom we called on in her slum would, I suspect, need a good deal of attention from the health visitor before she discarded the sluttish habits acquired in her years of squalor. She was a friendly little soul, with a sloping forehead and unwashed face, who, like most of her fellow-slum-dwellers, seemed quite pleased to be called on; the mother of three grubby infants under school-age—one of them in arms, one old enough to stand and stare at us, one crawling on the unmade family bed where, in the unrestrained manner of infancy, it had recently obeyed a call of nature. There were two more absent at school, the mother told us; these latter, presumably, being better clad and washed than their younger brethren—the education authority would see to that, providing at least the necessary footwear. A query with regard to the husband and father brought the all too frequent reply that he was out of work; the income that he and his family obtained from the public purse being thirty-nine shillings a week. Whereby, as in other like-situated

households, one glimpsed a problem affecting more than Glasgow and Glasgow's slums; the problem of the man of no particular skill who may find himself, when at length he gets a job, little, if at all, better off as to money than when he draws his dole in idleness. He may even—if his job means a rail or tram fare to and fro—be a shilling or two to the bad at the end of his working week. To the question: What inducement has such a man to work? the answer is obviously that, as far as his finances are concerned, the inducement is nil. There are, of course, other considerations besides cash; a man may feel bored as he lounges through life in sheer idleness and, being bored, seek the activity of work; or he may be of those who desire to give honourable service. But suppose a man in this position whose work is uncongenial—say, the dull daily minding of some form of machine in which he takes small interest—and it is hard to blame him for remaining unemployed when he can draw the same income, or nearly the same, by avoiding the labour he dislikes. In his position it is probable that many, if not most of us, would vote for the unearned increment; the attitude of these who ask themselves why they should do a hard week's work for an ultimate gain of two or three shillings is perfectly comprehensible. And in the not unlikely case I have supposed—where a man is worse off when employed, by a shilling or more spent in fares—he may esteem it his duty, for the sake of his family, to avoid unprofitable wage-earning. For when the family's weekly income is under two pounds, a shilling or so is a sum that can ill be spared.

And, in some instances—though not in all—preference

for the unearned income is not likely to be lessened when the unemployed man, with his family and furniture, are removed from a vermin-ridden, one-room tenement in Charlotte Street to an exemplary and far more extensive dwelling on one of the new estates that Glasgow has erected. To a flat, as we should call it in England—a house, as they call it up there—complete with living-room, bedrooms, scullery, bathroom, and entrance-hall; and for which the rehoused tenant, in a good many cases, will pay a lower rent than he paid for his evil-smelling slum. The tenants of a two-roomed abomination in one of the condemned blocks told us that their rent was ten shillings a week; for less than that sum more fortunate families are established in well-built flats of the type above described. . . . Hardly necessary to state that these latter rents are not economic; the families who pay them are receiving a subsidy from the ratepayer.

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According to the *Glasgow Herald* of May 30, 1936: 'In the last ten years the Scottish local authorities have built over 133,000 houses, the equivalent of a town half the size of Glasgow, and it is expected that by the time they have completed their housing programmes, they will have rehoused about a third of the total population of Scotland!' To these housing activities of the country Glasgow has contributed her full share; in the year 1919 it was estimated that the needs of the city amounted to 50,000 new dwellings, and sixteen years later, in September 1935, the Housing Department of the Glasgow Corporation celebrated the opening of its

forty-thousandth house—while subsidies have been granted for over 10,000 additional dwellings, erected by means of private enterprise. If Clydeside slums are a byword and reproach, the Clydeside of to-day, by its building schemes, is striving to make atonement for its past disgrace of neglect. To revisit Glasgow after several years' absence (as I did recently) is to realize how swiftly and widely the city has expanded her borders. Growth of population, as well as slum clearance, has necessitated housing schemes on a generous scale; hence the planned and ordered suburbs that have thrust, and thrust deeply, into yesterday's woodland and field. I have heard this encroachment on the open regretted, and not only for aesthetic reasons; I was told of material causes for regret—that much of the land that has been eaten up by the insatiable city was good farming land, a source of supply to the country. (The same thing, of course, is happening on the outskirts of many other cities.) It was a pity therefore (my informants urged) that slum-clearance schemes should have taken the form of new suburbs; it would have been better for Glasgow, and the country at large, if the farming land of the neighbourhood had been spared and tenement blocks had been erected in central districts, on the sites that had been cleared of slums. If the blocks had been several stories high, as they are elsewhere, it would not have been necessary to build all these new suburbs; and the rehoused citizens, it was added, would likely enough have preferred this alternative, had it been offered them; when a man had his dwelling in central Glasgow, he was usually nearby his place of work—there was less to be spent in fares and not so long a

journey night and morning. . . . All that may be true but there remains a real difficulty; where do you bestow your ejected slum-dwellers while you tear down their rookeries and replace them with new blocks of flats? By the present system of suburban expansion, there is no need to find temporary quarters for the tenant of condemned property; his new home is made ready before he is ejected from the old.

In all departments of modern urban life planning is an urgent necessity; urban life to-day is on too vast a scale to be left haphazard to its own unhindered growth, its own experimental devices. Like all human activities, however, planning, large-scale planning, has its drawbacks, whereof perhaps the chief is its tendency to monotony; municipal estates, by whatever city they may be erected—and along with their advantages of cubic space and modern convenience—are apt to suggest an atmosphere charged with dullness. It is not only the regimented look of the houses, set down neatly, according to plan; with no trace of individual taste or guidance, of adaptation to the varied needs of their owners. To the making of a beautiful city goes an element of growth, and there is no suggestion of growth about a housing scheme; it is a ready-made article, turned out of the municipal factory, and as such—in its beginnings at any rate—lacking in many of the daily interests and small excitements that diversify the day in the older quarters of a town. These older quarters may be shabby and insanitary, but in and around them are the interests and excitements of a life more varied than that of the regimented suburb; as a rule they are nearer than the regimented suburb to streets with a traffic of crowd

and vehicle. Nearer also to shop windows, where variety of content is an antidote to street monotony; and to another and valued variety of cheap places of amusement. In the new and sanitary estate, on the other hand, shops will be comparatively few and sometimes almost lacking—and as for a vista of lit window and display of fashion, that may mean a journey by bus. Then, in all likelihood, there will be small choice with regard to entertainment; one accessible cinema in lieu of half a dozen. And the streets themselves, being purely residential, will afford little interest in the way of passing traffic.

Women, it is obvious, must suffer more than men from the tedium of life on new suburban estates; stay-at-home women, that is to say, whose duties to their families confine them to their own neighbourhood. Men who leave home in the morning and return to it only when the day's work is over will be less irked by the blankness of their dormitory suburb. A friend of my own—a woman who was formerly a trade-union organizer—and with whom I once discussed this aspect of suburban housing schemes agreed and more than agreed with my views on the depressing effect of their monotony. She went so far as to designate one of the newest and tidiest of our London housing schemes as a set of little prisons for women! Well-appointed little prisons where a woman's sphere was indeed the home, since there was nothing to interest her outside it!¹ While a woman doctor I met in Glasgow, whose acquaintance with slums

¹ In all probability it is the desire to have something more to look at than tidy new streets that accounts for the popularity of ribbon-built housing by the side of arterial roads.

and their tenants is extensive, also knew of cases where the occupants of well-found municipal dwellings regretted their insanitary streets. She told me of women who had been moved from that slummiest of Glasgow districts, Anderston, into subsidized dwellings, fitted with modern conveniences; but who, to her knowledge, were bent on deserting their clean and spacious quarters and returning to Anderston's familiar squalor, so soon as they could find vacant room. What those who are seeking to do good to their fellows sometimes forget is that one man's meat is another man's poison, and the hardships of one type of mind, the pleasurable comforts of another; it is probably no more than a minority of our countrymen who object to noise as a daily accompaniment of life, and although to some of us privacy is an absolute need, others delight in close-huddling and find privacy hard to endure. . . . This dislike of privacy, by the by, has its bearings on more than the housing question; the superintendent of a Scottish centre for unemployed girls told me that it accounted for much of the unwillingness to enter domestic service. She gave me an instance of a girl for whom she had found a situation which seemed in every way suitable; but when she wound up its catalogue of advantages by announcing that the girl would have a room to herself, she was met with a prompt refusal to apply for the place. Far from being an inducement, the 'room to herself' was a threat; from babyhood upwards, that young woman had never slept alone, and she announced quite simply she'd be frightened in a room by herself. A friend of mine, living in a Scottish industrial town, to whom I passed on the story a day or two later, saw nothing

unusual about it; she herself had often come in contact with similar nervousness on the part of young people who lived close-huddled in their homes.

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However necessary the planned settlement may be—and however excellent in design and working-out—it will be lacking in certain of the attributes of a community-life that has grown with the years and been moulded by the habits of its members; the attributes that diversify our daily round with flashes of interest and amusement. As I have said, women are chief sufferers from the effects of a 'planned' atmosphere; but there are others beside homekeeping women who find rate-aided settlements lacking in variety of interest. It is, I am assured, a sober fact that, in one of the children's courts of Glasgovia, the father of a youngster who had been caught out at pilfering urged, in excuse for his offspring's larceny, the dullness of the nice, new, sanitary suburb to which the family had recently been moved from a slum. Slum surroundings, it appeared, however obnoxious they might seem to an outsider, were not without their compensations for the young—now, in his well-built, well-conducted neighbourhood, what was the laddie to do for his daily amusement? It was in search of amusement—by way of 'ploy'—that he'd gone off to pilfer a shop. . . . Such was the gist of the father's argument, which, I make no doubt, had a certain amount of truth in it. A good deal is done nowadays in the way of planned interest and amusement for the young—playing-fields, clubs, and the like; but there is also in most of us the need for unorganized interest and

amusement—the little daily incidents that come unexpectedly and the games that evolve without plan.

The city fathers of Glasgow, I gather, are not unaware of this need of young humanity for interest outside its own door; for as we were inspecting one of the new areas, we came to a halt before an open space bordered by 'slum clearance' buildings. The said open space was nothing much to look at; a stretch of ground, without a blade of grass—about as ornamental as a barrack-yard—on which a score or more of boys were kicking a football about. 'If this,' said my guide, 'were a housing scheme on the Continent instead of in Scotland, there would be a garden here instead of bare ground—with seats and flower-beds and tidy lawns and shrubs. All nice and green, instead of dusty bareness. That, of course, would be a great improvement as regards appearance but it would mean that these boys couldn't use it as a playground; and the chances are that nine out of ten of them, if they couldn't kick that ball about, would be hanging round street corners, getting into mischief and worse.' He added that good playing-fields were available and at no great distance but that there was often a difficulty in getting boys to go there; many, like those we were looking at, preferred to play in unorganized fashion in the streets.

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There is one Glasgow housing scheme which is surely ideal in the matter of providing both interest and amusement for its inmates; and that, strange to say, is a building—a hostel—in the Carntyne district which provides cheap lodgement for women, and elderly women

at that. I say it in no spirit of feminist acrimony, but simply as a fact that inquiry will verify, that it is not usual to consider the interest and amusement of elderly females until the needs, in that direction, of (a) males and (b) children and young persons have been satisfied in every particular. Hence my astonishment at this Carntyne hostel which, as I have said, is an ideal residence for ladies of the pension age; supplying them, for the sum of five shillings a week, with a self-contained flatlet where cooking and cleaning can be done to the best advantage, as hot water is on tap night and day. In addition, at the end of a passage, a communal bath and a communal washhouse is at the service of every half-dozen inmates; I was told, however, that these particular facilities were not much sought after—having plenty of hot water ready to hand, the old ladies prefer, as a general rule, to scrub both themselves and their garments on their private premises.

Considered as lodgings at five shillings a week, the flatlets are more than good value; but, in addition to the benefits already enumerated, they have an advantage peculiar to themselves which must rouse the envy of municipal tenants with domiciles less fortunately situated. All the windows in that hostel—thirty-four in number—look out upon a greyhound racing track; so that free, gratis, and for nothing those happy old ladies have a comprehensive view of proceedings for which others have to plank down their shillings. And this sporting prospect enjoyed from the windows is not only an interest in itself—it brings other interests into the lives of the hostel's occupants. The racing season means frequent visits from their children and grand-

children—who, but for the dogs, might be tempted to neglect their elderly relatives. . . . I cannot help suspecting that this advantageous residence was allotted in error to old ladies; the officials responsible being unaware of the amenities which might have been placed at the disposal of (a) masculine or (b) juvenile Glaswegians.

One of the inmates who kindly permitted a call and inspection of her domicile was an old Irishwoman, understood to be the doyenne of the hostel. When asked if she was satisfied with her present quarters, she qualified her affirmative by stating that it had been dull there lately; for some reason or other the track had been closed and there had been no racing for weeks—but she was glad to say it was beginning again in a day or two. Another Irish inmate, by origin of Belfast, was, she informed us, smartening up her clothes for July the twelfth—which the Orangeman of Glasgow still celebrates with banner and with drum. . . . It may, or may not, have been a coincidence that in the slums and slum-cleared tenements we inspected that day the majority of the occupants were bearers of Irish names—in the first of the new housing blocks in which we set foot there was Connor on one side the hallway and Curran on the other. Irish names are more than frequent in the region of industrial Scotland; but their prevalence and its effect on the national life needs more than a paragraph at the end of a chapter; it is important enough to require a chapter to itself.

IV. THE PROBLEM OF THE IRISHMAN

THE early years of the seventeenth century saw an organized Scottish migration to Ireland; after long and bitter wars against Elizabethan England, the Ulster Irish had at last been subdued and what is known in Irish history as the Flight of the Earls had left them without leaders to rally them.¹ Taking advantage of the Flight of the Earls, King James I of England and VI of Scotland declared large stretches of the north of Ireland confiscate; all the territory over which the exiles had ruled as chieftains was annexed by the Crown and by the Crown disposed of in its own interests—for the most part to settlers from King James's native Scotland. It was not, of course, a question of settling vacant territory or bringing a wilderness under the plough; the counties of Ulster were already thickly populated; but from the point of view of the neighbouring island, they were populated with the wrong sort of inhabitant. Ulster, under her O'Neills and O'Donnells, had for years been a thorn in the flesh of Elizabeth and a peril to her various Deputies; revolts had been frequent and all but successful; James and his advisers had no mind to risk another Nine Years War in Ireland and took their precautions accordingly. These precautions took the form of the mass migration known as the Plantation of Ulster; a migration which entailed the dispossession of the native Irish in favour of 'under-

¹ Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, and Rory O'Donnell, Earl of Tírconnell, who fled to the Continent in 1607.

takers' brought in from Scotland—and, to a lesser degree, in favour of the City Guilds of London, who gave their name to Londonderry. After this fashion the Ulster counties of Ireland were colonized by a Protestant block; after this fashion the foundations were laid of the present State of Northern Ireland—with its frontier drawn between Saorstát Éireann and the Six Counties.

Colonization in the seventeenth century (and not only then) was a matter of the stronger hand and of holding what you could take from the original possessor—whether the possessor were Red Indian or wild Irish! And in the case of the Ulster Irish more than mere lust of possession was at work; it was a matter of deliberate policy to deprive them of the power given by the ownership of land and reduce them to the status of poverty and servitude. The good lands of Ulster were divided up amongst the undertakers; while those who had once been the owners and farmers were turned out to do their best with the hillsides and bogs that remained. That, in brief, is the history of the Ulster Plantation and Scottish mass migration to Ireland.

To-day the stream of emigration has turned—turned back to its source—and the balance that was once against Ireland has swung to the other extreme. To-day, if one chooses to look at it that way, Ireland is taking her revenge for old wrongs by sending her colonists, her undesired colonists, to Scotland. (And not only to Scotland, as Liverpool knows to her cost; there, the old-time English invasions of Erin are being repaid, and with interest.) Mr. de Valera has told his people he looks forward to a day when Irish mass emigration will cease; when, to use his own words, 'our children shall no

longer be exported like cattle'—which means that he hopes for a time to come when the Irish farm and the Irish factory will suffice alike for the needs and comforts of all men born on Irish soil. But that day at present shows little sign of dawning; however desirable, it is still a distant hope; and against the fulfilment of that distant hope there works the prolific Irish birth-rate—works, and is encouraged to work. Till the birth-rate falls—or till the prosperity of the country rises at the same swift pace—Ireland, whatever her hopes and ambitions, must continue to export the children for whose upkeep she cannot provide. Time was when the majority of her emigrating children looked westward, across the Atlantic; when America took as many as she cared to export and was the natural, inevitable goal of the Irishman seeking his fortune. Nowadays America has no need of all and sundry; on the contrary, she selects the material for her melting-pot with care, numbers her immigrants according to quota and keeps watch and ward upon her gates. Hence the Irish stream across the Atlantic has dwindled, and Ireland's overflow—her formidable overflow—finds most of its outlet to the east; in the neighbouring regions of Scotland and England which, unlike America, have no power to refuse it entry. And the fact that this human overflow from Ireland has right of entry to the ports of Great Britain is, in all probability, the reason—the main reason—why Mr. de Valera, on attaining a presidency which to-day is dictatorship, has not ventured to live up to his opposition creed and put into practice his boasted republican principles. Writing on Irish conditions last year I pointed out that it was this Irish need to settle large

numbers of her citizens abroad that was the real obstacle to complete separation; 'this and not the wrath of Great Britain in arms is the real weapon that republican Ireland has to fear; a weapon it would forge against itself on the day it declared for independence.' So I wrote, when considering the problem on the Irish side of the sea, and further consideration, on the Scottish side, has not caused me to alter my views. Once the Free State had openly declared its Republic, and so cut its connection with the British Empire, the Free State citizen would find himself an alien in Great Britain; which would mean that the immigrant coming from Ireland would no longer have right of admission to the British labour market; would no longer, in event of his unemployment, be entitled to draw an allowance which is several shillings a week more generous than the dole he would receive, in like circumstance, in his native Saorstát Éireann. It is these considerations, one can hardly doubt, that cause Mr. de Valera to look before he leaps; fear lest his own ideal of a non-emigrating Ireland should be attained before he is ready for it, and attained with disastrous effects. For we may take it that his ear has not been deaf to the protests of Glasgow and Liverpool in the matter of their Irish population; we may take it, he realizes that, in both those cities, the proclamation of a free and independent Irish Republic would not be wholly unwelcome. On the contrary, 'not wholly unwelcome' would probably be a mild way of putting it; I have talked with Scots—responsible Scots, versed in public affairs—to whom a free and independent Irish Republic is a consummation devoutly to be wished; since only with Ireland 'a nation

once again' can they hope to raise barriers against the invader from Erin. And when his extremists have their way with de Valera and—willing or unwilling—he declares for a republic, he may be sure that on the day he runs up its flag, the exuberant rejoicing of his Irish countrymen will find echo in many Scottish hearts. . . . Time has its revenges, its ironies, and likewise its oddities; and in a world of fast-changing ideals and policies, there are less unlikely future possibilities than a British government urging independence on an unwilling Ireland aware of penalties and its drawbacks!¹

¹ A few days after the above was written, on November 3, 1936, Mr. de Valera, addressing his party, Fianna Fail, on the proposed new constitution for Ireland, showed that he was still not prepared to cut the painter and declare that Irish Republic of which once he was so eager an advocate. He proposes 'to bring in a constitution as if there were no relationship with the States of the British Commonwealth,' a constitution which Irishmen would freely choose 'if Britain were a million miles away'; but he does not call it a Republican Constitution. *The Times*, reporting him on November 4, says he declared that Anglo-Irish relations to-day were not better than before. 'Britain had tried to break the Irish people but had failed. On the other hand, he issued a rebuke to those hot-heads of the Fianna Fail Party who have been clamouring for a "showdown" with Great Britain in the matter of Northern Ireland or of the Free State Ports which are occupied by British warships.

"Unilateral action on our part," he said, "is not going to end partition or get the British out of our ports, and we must recognize that position. We will do everything in our power to solve these problems as time goes on, but they cannot be solved by unilateral action only. I will not be forced by any one to take up a position which I cannot hold."

'It is never easy'—so comments *The Times*—'to segregate the wheat from the chaff in Mr. de Valera's pronouncements, but the deduction seems to be safe that for the time being he has no intention of

A citizen of the Free State—a prominent citizen—with whom I once discussed this possible problem of the Irishman as alien, while admitting that, once a republic were declared, British authority would have the right to raise barriers against further migration, insisted that that was all we could do; we should have, he said, no right of expulsion as against men and women of Irish extraction who had already settled in the country. Later I passed on his opinion to a Scottish lawyer, who said he was not in agreement. His view was that, even if nothing more drastic could be done, men and women who were native to Southern Ireland would be liable to instant deportation from Great Britain when they broke the law or became a charge on the rates.¹ A republican Ireland, as the price of independence, would be liable to receive consignments of her less desirable citizens;

challenging the British Empire by an open breach.' . . . That is Mr. de Valera's usual attitude when it comes to the moment of straight challenge; and it is more than a guess that what restrains him from defiance is the thought and fear of Irish immigration turned back from the ports of Great Britain.

¹ If an incident recently reported is typical, it is at present a practice in Saorstát Éireann to get rid of undesirables of native growth by sending them over to Great Britain. In November 1936 a young Irishman was charged with bicycle-stealing in an English court, and in the course of the proceedings it was stated that a previous charge of larceny had been brought against him in the Free State, but had been withdrawn on condition that he would leave the country at once—and his fare to England was paid by the Free State Police. This seems to be a really ingenious economy on the part of the Irish Free State; it saves itself the trouble of looking after bad characters and the expense of keeping them in jail by passing on both jobs to its convenient (and much-abused) neighbour.

and my lawyer acquaintance opined that from Glasgow consignments would be heavy.¹ For whatever the virtues of the Irishman—and they are by no means few—he cannot be credited with the particular virtues that make for the peace and good order of cities. It is perhaps significant that, when his island was his own, the Irish Celt never built himself a town; until the coming of the Norse invader there was no such thing in all Ireland. The capital of Ireland was a Norse, not an Irish, foundation; like Limerick, like Wexford, it came into being as a port created by the stranger; the township of the ancient Celtic community was not a town but a scattered centre of the clan-life. But though the Irish Celts did not build their towns till the stranger taught them, and though the majority of Irish Celts who still remain in their native country have always lived by work on the land, yet the fact remains that, once away from their own patch of farm, by preference and persistently they avoid the field and take to the life of the street. There was a time, in the last century, when some of the best virgin land of America lay open to men who would push out West and take possession; and while it so lay, for any man to hold, Irish emigration was flowing, unchecked, to the United States—such Irish emigration being almost exclusively emigration of sons of the soil; but, save by rare exception, these sons of the soil declined to tread the pathway of the pioneer and settled down into mean-street quarters in Chicago or Pittsburg or New York. As they still settle in

¹ An estimate which does not appear to err on the side of exaggeration credits the Irish colony in Scotland with twice the amount of law-breaking to which it is entitled by its numbers.

the mean-street quarters of Lancashire and Clydeside towns.¹

But whatever the misgivings with which Scotland of to-day regards the Irish colony which has spread and is spreading in the region of Clydeside; whatever the cost of that colony in welfare work, slum clearance, and police proceedings; Scotland of to-day is bound to remind itself that the colony was not founded entirely on Irish initiative. On the contrary, in the day of *laissez-faire* politics and growing industrialism, the Irish influx was made welcome to the Clyde, since the Irish influx meant cheap labour. As mines were opened, and factories and foundries, cheap labour was brought over by shiploads from the Irish ports—it came, it is said, from Derry at a fare of two shillings a head; and as the imported Irishmen swarmed into Clydeside mines and works, they peopled and overpeopled the rookeries of Glasgow and of Paisley. But so long as new shafts were being sunk in the coal district, so long as there was call for new railway systems, and therefore for the work of Irish navvies; so long as new shipyards were opening on the Clyde—there was little thought of the problems to be raised in Glasgow of the future by Irish influx and

¹ In a Nationalist pamphlet on *Scottish Reconstruction* the subject of unwanted immigration is touched on as follows: 'Scottish Nationalists do not advocate a policy of racial exclusiveness. But they recognize that every self-governing State possesses the inherent right to regulate immigration and emigration in the interest of its own Nationals. It would therefore be the duty of a Scottish Parliament to consider impartially all questions of public assistance, employment, and social welfare, and deal with them as circumstances require, free from all racial and religious prejudice.'

settlement. In matters economic and social it is a true saying—an over-true saying—that the sins of the fathers are visited on the children. . . . When heavy industries were no longer what they had been and unemployment had revealed itself as endemic disease of the body politic; when the comfortable belief in *laissez-faire* had been shattered, and the needs of health and housing could no longer be neglected—it was then that the problem of Irish population began to loom large on the Clydeside.¹

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‘If the Irish were cleared out, we should have no unemployment’—that is a statement I have heard more than once from Scottish lips; but it is only fair to set against it another statement also heard from Scottish lips; that the Irishman is often more willing as a worker than the Scot. As to that, for lack of nearer knowledge, I have no opinion to express; but even if his claim be granted to superiority in certain types of work, there are serious drawbacks attached to the Irishman’s presence in large numbers. And his numbers in Scotland are sufficiently formidable; Clydeside alone has an Irish population of something like six hundred thousand—that is to say, of considerably more than a tenth of the total population of Scotland. (If we accommodated, in the London area, a colony of Irishmen numbering more than a tenth of the total population of England, that colony

¹ To be noted that Irish immigration was not the only form of cheap labour imported in the heyday of Scottish industrialism; in the region of furnaces and mining shafts there is a considerable admixture of Polish and Lithuanian blood.

would run to well over four million souls.) Nor has the Irish influx stopped short at the region round the Clyde; Edinburgh, also, has her colony and problem, while in Dundee, a city of about a hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants, I was told that the Catholic population, which is largely of Irish extraction, numbers about one in six.

It is a fact undoubted that the Irish population of Glasgow and its neighbourhood is accountable for more than its due proportion of crime and offence against the law; it is also a fact that owing to its number the average Irish family of the poorer districts makes heavier calls than the average Scottish family on the purse of the tax- and rate-payer. All varieties of the animal creation are a nuisance when they breed too rapidly; a plain, blunt truth that applies to men as well as to rabbits and to mice—and applies, perhaps, with especial force in a world which cannot reconcile the slum with its civic conscience, and is bent on raising the general standard of living. There are peoples professing the Roman Catholic religion whose birth-rate is following the downward example of their neighbours; but the Irish Roman Catholic, as a general rule, remains obedient to priestly teaching on the subject. That, in housing alone, means higher cost to municipality and state; and under the provisions of the latest Housing Act, which requires a room for every two members of the family, that cost will be considerably increased. And housing is only one item of family expenditure; where children are numerous, costs of education are proportionately heavy—and the Roman Catholic community insists on its separate schools. While in the case of really necessitous families—and among the

Irish are found many such—there are other costs of assistance, in the way of food and clothing, to their children attending school.

The great majority of the Irish colony have been born on Scottish soil, as children or grandchildren of earlier generations of immigrants; but the influx still continues and the census of 1931 gave the number of Scottish residents born in Ireland at 124,000. It is true that the number of English-born residents was greater—164,000; but whereas Scots, in return, migrate freely to England, they do not migrate to Ireland in anything like the same numbers.¹

Given the numerical strength of the Irish vote in Glasgow and it is obvious that Glasgow's city fathers must be ignorant, officially, of any form of birth-control teaching; such teaching as is available—and there is at least one clinic which, as I can testify, does not lack for clients—is available only as result of private enterprise and energy. In connection with this subject of Irish antagonism to birth-control, I was told, a year or two ago, by a resident in one of the Clydeside parliamentary divisions, that Catholic voters were being urged to vote, at the next election, against a Labour politician who had been heard to express himself in favour of the limitation of the family.

It would be a mistake to imagine that the Irish settlement in Scotland is wholly and entirely Roman Catholic; there is a considerable Protestant contingent from the

¹ The Scottish-born residents of England outnumber the English-born residents of Scotland by more than two to one.

north. The Irishman, whether from north or south, and whatever his form of religious faith, is addicted to the cherishing of feuds; hence, in Glasgow as in Belfast, the twelfth of July is a day when the Orangeman turns out in force, with beating of drums and with banners—a day, therefore, of extra work for the police! Nor is it only on the Feast of Boyne Water that Orange and Green come to clash; there is, one is told, a certain football fixture which rouses partisan feeling to its height and is liable to end in something like a general battle. While a friend of my own once described to me a meeting, under Orange auspices, which she had the good fortune to attend in a Glasgow hall; an indignation meeting against some arbitrary action of the Catholic Church. The enthusiasm of denunciation was wonderful; it was, she said, a magnificent moment when an excited orator, at the climax of his speech, shouted ‘Let the Pop’ come to Glasgow and we ’ll show him what we think of him!’—and the entire audience, starting to its feet, took up the challenge in a general roar of ‘Let the Pop’ come to Glasgow!’ . . . History sayeth not what the Vatican thought of the challenge!¹

¹ See Note *Religion and Gang-Fights*.

V. HIGHLAND DEPOPULATION, VOLUNTARY AND INVOLUNTARY

FROM the lone shieling of the misty island
Mountains divide us, and a waste of seas;
Yet still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

The lines are well known: a respectable number of English-speaking persons could probably quote them without prompting. It is unlikely, however, that many could quote without prompting any further verses of the poem; and the majority of those to whom the phrase anent 'the lone shieling' is familiar are unaware that the *Canadian Boat Song*, from which it comes, was a rhythmical protest against what are known as 'the Clearances.' The wholesale evictions whereby thousands of Highlanders were driven from their glens into exile.

When the bold kindred in the time long vanished
Conquered the soil and fortified the keep,
No seer foretold the children should be banished,
That a degenerate lord might boast his sheep.

So the (uncertain) author of the *Canadian Boat Song*, whose bitterness of resentment has been shared and expressed by others; notably Sir Walter Scott.

'In too many instances,' he wrote, 'the Highlands have been drained, not of their superfluity of population, but of the whole mass of the inhabitants, dispossessed by an unrelenting avarice which will one day be found to have

been as shortsighted as it is unjust and selfish. Meantime the Highlands may become the fairy ground for romance and poetry, or the subject of experiment for the professors of speculation, political and economical. But if the hour of need should come, the pibroch may sound through the deserted region but the summons will remain unanswered.'

The passing of time has largely justified Scott's prophecy. Because the former social and economic system of Gaelic Scotland has not yet been adequately replaced, the Highlands are still 'the subject of experiment for the professors of speculation.' When a tradition and manner of living is destroyed, it is often a long and difficult job to create a satisfactory substitute.

Scott's condemnation of the 'unrelenting avarice' that depeopled the glens was echoed by many of his countrymen. Dealing with present conditions in the Highlands, one of the foremost of modern Scottish authors¹ sums up the process of 'unrelenting avarice' as follows:

'Even a retrospective Jacobite like myself, has to admit that the Forty-Five was a crowning calamity for the Highlands. Had it never taken place, the social system of the Scots Gaels would have gradually adjusted itself to changing conditions, and a large proportion of the people would have acquired security of tenure. The dislocations and estrangements resulting from the unsuccessful rebellion permitted of, and even encouraged, evictions, clearances, deforestations, and so forth which were contrary to good national policy and which a government in full sympathy with the Highland people

¹ William Power, in his Foreword to a pamphlet by Dr. Lachlan Grant, entitled *A New Deal for the Highlands*.

would never have sanctioned. The people, left helplessly exposed to the untempered economic blast that had been let in upon them, lost heart and the power of organization, and the process went on unchecked that, by the time the first Crofter's Act was passed, had reduced most of the Highlands to a soil-impoverished sheepwalk and a sporting waste.'

Many causes have gone to the depopulation of the Highland glens—depopulation which has proceeded so far that to-day one-half of the area of Scotland contains but a small minority of her people. One of the causes, and that the most grievous, was a direct consequence of the abolition of the clan system; it was more than the military power of the chiefs that went down with the hopes of the Stewart at Culloden—the old Gaelic method of land administration and ownership. In Scotland, as in Ireland, the land of the Gael was never the actual property of the chief; it was the property of the sept, the clan, over which the chiefs had rights, patriarchal and military.¹

It was this system against which legislation was aimed when Jacobite rebellion had been crushed; it was

¹ 'Under the clan system, which persisted up to the second Jacobite Rebellion and has not yet wholly disappeared, the Highland economy was essentially patriarchal or tribal, and the hierarchy represented by the senior members of the clan family had, as its principal responsibility, the maintenance and nourishment of the clan itself, and every member of the clan in turn had an immediate responsibility to the clan hierarchy. He had practically no ownership in the land, even if in the course of his agricultural occupation he was engaged continuously in extracting from nature a sufficiency to maintain him and allow him to contribute something to the community.'—Hugh Quigley, *A Plan for the Highlands*.

abolished, along with the national dress of the Highlands. Clan rights ceased to exist. The chief was transformed into a landowner, a laird, and what had been the territory he held for his clan was henceforth a personal estate. It was the crofter-clansman, and not his chief, who suffered the full penalty of loyalty to the Stewart cause; for, as years went by, the Jacobite chiefs or their descendants had their confiscate territories restored to them. True, they were shorn of their military status and authority; but they received in its stead rights of ownership in land which reduced their fellow-clansmen (once their fellow-owners) to the position of tenants liable to ejectment at will. And of that power of ejectment, in the next few decades, the Highland landowner only too often took advantage; showing himself willing, and more than willing, to forget the long traditions of chieftainship.

'With this profound metamorphosis the old Highland society was destroyed once for all. The chief was no longer a responsible official with duties to the people whose judge and captain he was by ancient right. He was now a landlord with duties towards his land and his rents. "I have lived in woeful times," said a chief forty years after the Rebellion; "when I was young the only question asked concerning a man of rank was, How many men lived on his estate? Then it was, How many black cattle it would keep? but now it is, How many sheep will it carry?" For the chiefs, once they had forgotten they were chiefs, found in the new order compensations for the vanished glory of their patriarchal privileges. The clansmen were not so fortunate.'¹

¹ George Malcolm Thomson, *A Short History of Scotland*.

So a modern historian, confirming the words of a pamphleteer who wrote in the day of the 'Clearances'; the wholesale evictions which had been made possible by the 'profound metamorphosis' of the Highland social system.

'It is to British legislation that the people of the Highlands owe the relative position in which they stand to their chiefs. There was a time when they were strangers to the feudal system which prevailed in the rest of the kingdom. Every man among them sat free as his chief. But by degrees the power of the latter, assisted by Saxon legislation, encroached upon the liberty of the former. Highland chiefs became feudal lords—the people were robbed to increase their power. And now we are reaping the fruits of this in recent evictions.'¹

The Forty-Five is one of those historical memories that endures, by reason of its mingling of tragedy and romance—the pitiful slaughter of Culloden, the fugitive Prince, and the loyalty that saved him from his enemies. But, as has been shown, its real importance lay in its economic and social effects on the Highlands, the enduring change and enduring injury it wrought on a large section of the Scottish people. Mr. Evan M. Barron of the *Inverness Courier* is a Highlander of to-day who has small sympathy with the Jacobite legend which 'a long succession of silly sentimentalists' has cherished, and which, in his view, 'has hung like a miasma over the Highlands and the Highland people, obscuring and distorting them, and sending off clouds of noxious vapour': all the same, in spite of his unpopular attitude

¹ Written in the year 1850 by a Rev. Dr. MacLachlan of Edinburgh.

towards the rising, he does not underrate its importance and sums up its effects as follows:

'Before the '45 the Highlands were working out their own salvation, slowly it may be, but surely and along natural lines, and one of the worst, as it was one of the most lasting consequences of the rising, was that it put a full and sudden stop to that natural process of development, and destroyed the existing social system without putting anything in its place. To that portentous fact do the Highlands owe most, and probably all, of the grievous ills from which they have suffered for nigh 200 years. Our devastated glens, our scanty population, the evils of our land system, our comparative poverty, our retarded prosperity, our neglected potentialities, all these and much more do we owe to the '45, and all these are part of the problem which we who live in and love the Highlands are striving to solve to-day.'¹

It is obvious that, even if there had been no Forty-Five, the old clan economy would have been bound, ere many years had passed, to suffer drastic alteration; its purport was to serve the necessities of a tribal-military life, and with the passing of warfare amongst the rival clans it would have lost much of its meaning. Mr. Hugh Quigley, in the pamphlet from which I have already quoted, points out that the tendency of the system was 'to create a body of low-paid agricultural labour with a standard of living only tolerable in a clan system.' As a result of this low standard of living, 'the capacity of the country . . . to carry the population was . . . very much greater than it would have been in a more highly developed community where higher standards of living

¹ *The Truth about the Highlands*; a pamphlet published in Inverness.

and more generous conceptions of economic return were in force. The clan system . . . added little if anything to the economic value of the territory, but equally it took little away.'

Again it is obvious that such a system could persist only in isolation; for so long only as the Highlanders dwelt in their glens and isles, out of contact with the higher standard of living that prevailed in the outside world. It is easy to lay too much stress on the Clearances as a factor in depopulation; other and more usual agencies have also been at work. The drift of the Highlander from his glens and isles has not always been a drift enforced; from rural Scotland, as from rural districts all the world over, the young go cityward by choice. But the fact that there has been, and is, a voluntary drift of population from the Highlands—that fact does not make less shameful and terrible the enforced migration of the Clearances. The driving away from their hearths and homes of thousands of unfortunates whose patches of cultivated croft were required by their landlords for the grazing of sheep; unfortunates whose clansmen fathers, as a rule, had dwelt for centuries on the soil from which they were driven. With the passing of the old relationship and jurisdiction, the arm of the clansman was no longer a factor in the clan economy; his military service was no longer required by his chief, and the tiny dues he paid for his croft were as nothing compared to the profits that might be extracted from crofts converted into sheep-walks. For it was the sheep, not the deer, for whose benefit the worst of the Clearances were made; the era of wholesale eviction was the era of high-priced

wool and therefore of profitable sheep-farming—so it was for the sake of wool, not of shooting rights, that the crofters were driven from their holdings in the sacred name of improvement.¹ It is true that much of the land from which they were driven is nowadays valuable only as deer forest or grouse moor, but these wastes of shooting-land were a later development of the sheep-run; it was only when his sheep-run had ceased to be profitable—when Australian wool was outrivalling his own—that the Scottish landowner found it advisable to substitute deer for sheep and make a business of his shooting rights.²

¹ A pamphlet in defence of the eviction policy, published in the year 1820 and written by the factor on the Sutherland property, is entitled *An Account of the Improvements on the Estates of the Marquis of Stafford*.

'The earlier improvers who drove the peasants from the sheltered valleys to the exposed sea-coast, in order to make room for sheep and sheep-farmers, pleaded erroneously the public benefit as the justification for their conduct. They maintained that more food and clothing would be produced by the new system, and that the people themselves would have the advantage of the produce of the sea as well as that of the land for their support. The result, however, proved them to be mistaken, for henceforth the cry of Highland destitution began to be heard, culminating at intervals in actual famines.'—Alfred Russel Wallace, *Land Nationalization, its Necessities and Aims*.

² 'It is sometimes supposed that the people were cleared out to make room for deer forests; in the great majority of cases this is untrue. . . . Until 1850 the numbers of sheep in the Highlands grew steadily. The attractions of sport in the area were late in being discovered and commercialized. In 1786 Colonel Thornton shot, fished, and falconed where he liked all over the Highlands; in 1833 Lord Malmesbury reported the same happy state of things, though there is reason to believe that by that time some preservation of shooting rights existed. At the beginning of the nineteenth century

Mr. Hugh Quigley, in that valuable document, *A Plan for the Highlands*, shows that in the earlier stages of deer-forest development—up to about the year 1890—the economic conditions of the country were, if anything, improved by the change-over from sheep-farming. A great deal of capital was sunk, in the years of development, on fences and timber, on roads and sanctuaries; and in addition there was the annual expenditure of owners and tenants, as the shooting season came round. From these two sources, Mr. Quigley estimates, the Highlands must have benefited by an amount running into millions, and he considers that if the farming and fishing industries had been properly organized, the new market created by the deer-stalking interest would have been of real value to the country. Even as it was, 'the construction of new lodges, shooting-boxes, and even larger residences, brought with it a fairly steady level of employment for those sections of the population which were capable of carrying on this work, but when development was finished towards the end of the century, the value of this economic contribution was bound to decline.' Still, even when the epoch of construction was over, so long as the supply of shooting tenants was constant, and it was the exception for any deer forest to remain unlet in the season, the 'industry' of deer-stalking remained profitable—profitable enough to maintain an army of

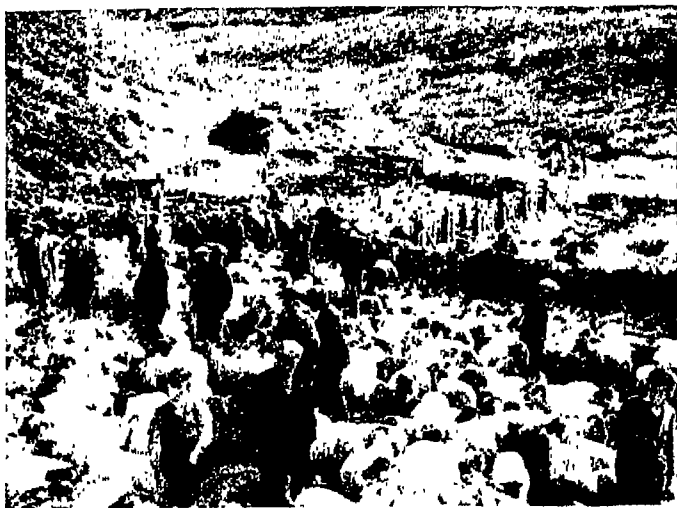
there were only nine deer forests; forty years later deer were found in thirty-nine areas. But it was not until the wool prices broke under Australian competition in the seventies that the great transformation took place. In 1883 there were 1,975,209 acres of deer forests; in 1912 the total had grown to 3,584,966 acres.'—George Malcolm Thomson, *A Short History of Scotland*.

gamekeepers. 'In the last few years, however, this source of economic advantage has tended to disappear fairly rapidly with the breaking up of the deer forests, the sales of enormous blocks of land, and the decline in the taste for deer-stalking on the part of industrialists and those sections of the population capable of subsidizing it. The result now is that the only economic value to be attached to the deer forests results from a computation of the deer, grouse, and other game killed.' No exact figures are available with regard to the collective bag of the Highland sportsman, but Mr. Quigley thinks it would be fairly accurate to assess the annual slaughter of deer at somewhere about five thousand—the market value of each animal being somewhere about £3 10s. Five thousand deer at seventy shillings a head, when divided by the total acreage of Scottish deer forest, work out at a profit of three-halfpence an acre; to this must be added the profit obtained from grouse—unlikely, however, to be more than another three-halfpence. 'In other words, the contribution of the deer forests at present to the economic production of Scotland is so small as to be almost imperceptible, and it would be difficult to advance the theory that the land represented by those forests, a large proportion of it capable of afforestation and a larger proportion still capable of agricultural development, should have no greater annual productive value per acre than the price of one good-sized cabbage in Covent Garden.'

Since deer-stalking and grouse-shooting are not yet extinct forms of sport, Mr. Quigley's estimate of the annual productive value of grouse moors and deer forests would seem to be placed rather low; there is still a trek

northward in the shooting season and that trek means money to the Highlands. Still, even if the present product of the deer forest is more than a modest three-pence per acre, there can be little doubt that Mr. Quigley is right in thinking a plan of development extremely urgent and in speaking of 'the collapse of the deer forests.' In proof of the collapse, he points out that in little more than a year—during 1935 and the beginning of 1936—'rather more than one-fourth of the total area of deer forests in Scotland came under the hammer.' What once was a source of income to the Scottish landowner has become an expense that he finds it impossible to support. The long-drawn slump in the United States had its effect on the deer forest market; millionaires whose incomes had shrunk uncomfortably no longer crossed the Atlantic in order to take high-priced shoots. One of the results of this drop in the value of sporting property has been a considerable extension of the paying-guest system in country houses; owners who formerly had no difficulty in letting their property in bulk for the season now find that the only way to make it pay is to act as 'mine host' to visitors of sporting persuasion. Nor does it seem likely that moors and deer forests will ever again recover their old investment value. 'One must also,' says Mr. Quigley, 'take into account the fact that the development of any tourist industry must automatically weaken the value of the deer forests, since one cannot have deer and tourists on the same ground.'¹

¹ In *The Lion and the Unicorn*, Eric Linklater's argument for Nationalism, there is a pleasant passage on the contract of tourists and



C. M. Angus

SEPARATING LAMBS FROM EWES, LEVERBURGH, HARRIS



DYEING WOOL, HARRIS

As said above, the waste condition of so much of the Highlands is due to more than the Clearances; from the material, economic point of view it is possible to exaggerate their importance—with the call of industrialism, the spread of education, migration was bound to take place. But it is a narrow view that takes in the material only; more especially when dealing with a Celtic people, whose memory for tragedy is long. The tragedy of eviction is often very near to the descendants of those who suffered it.

Of all the Highland Clearances, the most famous, or infamous, are those that took place on the Sutherland estates. Between the years 1812 and 1820, says a contemporary chronicler, Donald Macleod,¹ the whole interior of the county of Sutherland was 'converted to a solitary wilderness where the voice of man praising God

deer. 'A circumstance of some interest in connection with the history of the Clearances is that within recent years the Highlands have been reinvaded by human beings. . . . The invaders are called hikers, and complaints have been heard that they disturb the grouse and annoy the deer for whose sake the hills were made so large and the glens so lovely. But many of the hikers must be descendants of the evicted Highlanders who sought refuge in the Lowland cities, and in contrast to those who complain of their behaviour, I find it very pleasant to think of them worrying the deer that replaced the sheep that dispossessed their fathers.' There will be many to agree with Mr. Linklater that it is well the hiker should possess the beauty of Scotland; but many also who, while wishing the hiker joy of his heritage, will pray him to have some respect for it—to break himself, for instance, of the habit of regarding it as a dustbin. I myself have never taken the way up Ben Nevis; but I have heard it said that, even if the path were not clear to the walker, it could easily be traced by means of its accompanying litter!

¹ In a volume entitled *Gloomy Memories*.

is not to be heard, nor the image of God upon man to be seen; where you can set a compass with twenty miles of a radius upon it, and go round with it full stretched, and not find one acre of land within the circumference which has come under the plough for the last thirty years, except a few in the parishes of Lairg and Tongue—all under mute, brute animals. . . .’ Of the human beings expelled to make room for sheep, many, willingly or unwillingly, were shipped across the Atlantic to Canada; the Red River Settlement, the beginning of Winnipeg, was colonized in part by exiles who had been driven from their Sutherland homes. And those of the dispossessed who remained in their native county were bidden to migrate from the glens of the interior to the seashore, with which many of them were wholly unfamiliar. Hugh Miller, the geologist, wrote bitterly of the miseries of these landsmen obliged to turn to the sea for a livelihood. ‘We have heard of the famished people blackening the shores, like the crew of some vessel wrecked on an inhospitable coast, that they might sustain life by the shellfish and seaweed laid bare by the ebb. Many of their allotments, especially on the western coast, were barren in the extreme. . . . Their first efforts as fishermen were what might be expected from a rural people unaccustomed to the sea. The shores of Sutherland, for immense tracts together, are ironbound and much exposed. . . . There could not be more perilous seas for the unpractised boatman to take his first lessons on; but though the casualties were numerous and the loss of life great, many of the younger Highlanders became expert fishermen. . . .’

And the same point is made by another authority,

Alexander Mackenzie, whose *History of the Highland Clearances* is a standard work on the subject:

'Every conceivable means, short of the musket and the sword, were used to drive the people from the land they loved, and to force them to exchange their crofts and homes—brought originally into cultivation and built by themselves or their forefathers—for wretched patches among the barren rocks on the seashore, and to depend, after losing their cattle and their sheep, and after having their houses burnt about their ears or razed to the ground, on the uncertain produce of the sea for subsistence, and that in the case of a people who, in many instances, and especially in Sutherlandshire, were totally unacquainted with a seafaring life and quite unfitted to contend with its perils. . . .'

From Dornoch, the paradise of northern golfers, I was driven one day along the coast to Helmsdale and then inland, some ten or twelve miles, to the parish of Kildonan. To-day a parish of a few scattered houses; but, previous to the day of wholesale eviction, numbering and feeding 2,000 souls. Two thousand souls who, by order of the factor, were 'utterly rooted and burnt out and the whole parish converted into a solitary wilderness.' The destruction of the crofters' houses by fire, was, of course, a simple and drastic method of ensuring that the buildings should not be reoccupied. Donald Macleod, of the *Gloomy Memories*, who was an eyewitness of the burnings in Kildonan and its neighbourhood, describes how, 'when all the houses in an extensive district were in flames at once,' he 'ascended

a height about eleven o'clock in the evening, and counted 250 blazing houses.' (Most of them, no doubt, little cabins, roughly built; still, 250 homes!) 'The conflagration,' Macleod goes on, 'lasted six days, till the whole of the dwellings were reduced to ashes or smoking ruins.' As for the actual process of eviction, it was conducted with a brutal haste. 'Little or no time was given for the removal of persons or property; the people striving to remove the sick and helpless before the fire should reach them; next struggling to save the most valuable of their effects. The cries of the women and children, the roaring of the affrighted cattle, hunted at the same time by the yelling dogs of the shepherds and the smoke and fire, altogether presented a scene that completely baffles description—it required to be seen to be believed. A dense cloud of smoke enveloped the whole country by day and even extended far out to sea. . . . During one of these days a boat actually lost her way in the dense smoke as she approached the shore, but at night was enabled to reach a landing-place by the lurid light of the flames. . . .'

Judging by the above, the wholesale dispossession of the crofter by his landlord was a forecast, on a small scale, of the 'liquidation' of the Russian peasant 'Kulak' by his government. In both cases the justification for the martyrdom of a class was the same: economic improvement, the advantage of the greater number.

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By all accounts, the Sutherland evictions took first place alike for extent and for ruthlessness of method; but the ousting of humanity in favour of the sheep was

by no means confined to the soil of one county—there were clearances from Ross, Argyll, and Inverness-shire, clearances from Skye and the Hebrides. And it is a black and ugly thought that men who had served in Highland regiments during the Peninsular War too often returned to find their homes laid desolate and their families driven elsewhere—down to the sea-coast or sometimes, perhaps, to a more distant settlement, in Canada. Those who were persuaded to leave their native land for Canada, after suffering the miseries of an Atlantic voyage in ill-found vessels, arrived, in many cases, in a state of sheer poverty and helplessness.

The Highlander's long memory does not desert him when he lives far removed from the heather of his ancestors; I had evidence of the fact on the day I drove out to the little kirk which is practically all that remains of old Kildonan. As we neared the building, my friend and I, we saw that we were not its only visitors; a car was stationed a few yards away and four or five people were walking about in the graveyard. Seeing us, one of the party approached and asked, did we know where they could get the key of the church—they were anxious to see the interior. As it happened, the key, at that moment, was in my friend's pocket, having been loaned us, for investigation purposes, by the minister who had charge of it—a piece of luck for our new-found acquaintances, since he lived some miles away! The reason for their interest in the church was made manifest when they introduced themselves as descendants of a family once 'cleared' from Kildonan—one of the families that migrated to the Red River Settlement; having crossed the Atlantic for a visit to Europe, they

had come to see the church where their ancestors had worshipped, and the glen whence those ancestors were driven, well over a century ago. There are, I was told, a good many such overseas visitors to Kildonan and its neighbourhood; the evicted crofters of the Clearances had lost their little wealth of land and house before they set sail for their new country of Canada; their lives, in the beginning, were lives of penury and danger; but all the same, in many cases they made good. So much so, that many Canadians of Highland descent are said to look on the enforced migration of their fathers as a blessing undoubted for themselves. But the fact that many of the exiles rose above their misfortunes, made the wilderness blossom and, in time, attained prosperity for themselves and their families—that fact does not lessen the reproach of the landowners who drove them from the country they were bred in.

The crofters, by the by, were not the only working population to vanish from the Strath of Kildonan; a mile or two from the little church, on the Helmsdale road, there are traces of the sudden invasion that took place when gold was discovered in a couple of the local streams. In a guide to the county of Sutherland¹ I found it stated that in the beds of these burns 'traces of gold were found as early as 1869' and for a time in payable quantities, the record nugget being no less than two ounces in weight. All kinds of people, smitten with the gold fever, flocked to the district in hundreds, but when the burns became denuded of their gold and operations were extended to the adjoining ground, it was found that the gold took the form of a fine dust

¹ William Cromb, *Sutherland*.

that defied recovery by the 'washing-out' process. Altogether, gold to the value of over ten thousand pounds sterling is believed to have been secured in the course of these operations. The presence of so many miners in the district, however, became such a source of annoyance and loss to the sheep-farmers—their sheep being disturbed and their winterings damaged—that the then Duke of Sutherland felt compelled to close the 'diggings' and warn off all invaders. Subsequently, in 1894, the Duke tried the experiment of allowing a small number of selected men to test the ground for three months—but again the result was disappointing—the golden candle wasn't worth the game. Some years later a mining expert was commissioned to go thoroughly over the ground and his report 'showed conclusively that gold did not exist at Kildonan in sufficient quantity to make the extraction of it a remunerative venture.' . . . And with that, presumably, the Kildonan mining industry came to an end; though still, I doubt not, there are hopeful souls who pause by the gold-bearing waters and gaze into them—in the hope of discovering another two-ounce nugget!

To read of the Highland Clearances is to wonder at the manner in which they were accepted by their victims: the mass patience, the lack of violent outbreak. Here and there a locality would attempt resistance to the order but the general rule was submission; mass eviction which, in Ireland, would have produced, at the least, a crop of murders and a secret society, were submitted to without retaliation—and that by a people traditionally

warlike and traditionally attached to the soil. One of the reasons for this lack of resistance is said to have been the influence of the Highlander's Church; the ministry, with rare and shining exceptions, seem to have sided with the landlord's sheep as against their own dispossessed flocks—that is to say, they preached patience under a misfortune which they represented not as the product of landowning greed but as divine punishment for the sins of the crofting population. And if, as William Power has suggested, 'dislocations and estrangements resulting from the unsuccessful rebellion (the Forty-Five) . . . encouraged evictions,' the memory of unsuccessful rebellion and its bitter consequence may have counselled the evicted to submission, lest worse befall. Something, it may be, was due to the fact that their long tradition of leadership was broken; there was no chief, as of old, to head their resistance; on the contrary, in all too many instances, it was the titular chief, transformed into landlord, who evicted the crofters of his clan.¹

¹ 'One may be inclined to ask, indeed, whether a people who submitted so tamely to destruction could have been worth preserving. The reply of the Irish peasant to eviction was a shot from behind a dike or the boycott—neither of them pretty weapons, but effective. It was here, however, that history was against the Highlander. The Irish Gael had suffered intensely by the uprooting of his aristocratic social system. But at least that left him face to face with oppressors of a different race and religion, in resistance to whom he had no scruples. For the Scottish Gael his native aristocracy, his "natural leaders," still survived, and it was they who dealt him the final and crushing blow.

'Loyalty and religion—for the ministers were usually ready to ascribe his misfortunes to the just judgments of God—combined to make rebellion morally impossible.' So Colin Walkinshaw in his

Be that as it may, it was not until long after the cruellest era of the Clearances was over—in what was known as the Crofters' War of the 'eighties—that Highland grievance expressed itself in riot and concerted lawbreaking; and even that belated access of violence was ascribed, in part, to Irish example and influence. Whatever their origins, the riot and lawbreaking of Skye and Lewis were justified in their results; in the year 1886 was passed an Act of Parliament which made a beginning of better things by gaining security of tenure

Scots Tragedy; and there is a passage in Boswell which illustrates the persistence of clan loyalty in spite of harsh treatment:

'After dinner, M'Queen sat by us a while, and talked with us. He said, all the laird of Glenmorison's people would bleed for him, if they were well used; but that seventy men had gone out of the glen to America. That he himself intended to go next year; for that the rent of his farm, which twenty years ago was only five pounds, was now raised to twenty pounds. That he could pay ten pounds and live; but no more. Dr. Johnson said, he wished M'Queen laird of Glenmorison, and the laird to go to America. M'Queen very generously answered, he should be sorry for it; for the laird could not shift for himself in America as he could do.' As an example of loyalty, as well as an example of Christian ethic, the answer would be hard to beat. . . . Dr. Johnson, for all his anti-Scottish prejudice, was a better friend to the dispossessed Highlanders than many of their own chiefs, and championed their cause with his customary plainness of speech.

Mr. Ronald Macdonald Douglas, in his delightful *Scots Book*, quotes a prophecy concerning the lack of resistance to the Clearances; it was uttered in the seventeenth century by one of the most famous of Highland seers—called the Brahan Seer, from the estate on which he worked—who, among other events of the future, foretold the battle of Culloden. His prophecy concerning the Clearances was: 'The clans will become so effeminate as to allow themselves to be driven from their native land by an army of sheep.'

to the crofter, and likewise ensuring him compensation for improvements. While to-day the policy of the Board of Agriculture is to create small holdings in the Highlands and so keep the crofter on the land.

It has to be admitted, however, that, spite of Crofters' Acts and creation of small holdings, the 'Drift to the South' continues; not because there is any desire, nowadays, to oust the Gael from his glens and his isles; but because the Gael, like the countryman elsewhere, lends ear to the call of a busier, more crowded world. A world better known to him than to his fathers—better known and likewise more accessible. Our improved communications, by rail, road, and air, take the townsman out into the country for his holiday, but they carry the countryman into the town for his life. And to-day as always—in the Highlands as everywhere—the school is a factor in the depopulation of the countryside; a fact recognized so far away as Plantagenet England which forbade book-learning to more than one child in a villein's family, lest the soil lack its necessary labour. I once discussed this subject of the cityward drift with a Highland schoolmaster, one of the finest of his type, many of whose pupils have gone from their village to do him credit in Scottish universities, and who holds, moreover, that every child who comes into the world has a right to the best teaching available. All the same that schoolmaster, in the course of our talk, attributed the present-day drift from the Highlands largely to the spread of education. Thirty years ago, he told me, the western district in which he lived and taught had counted its 1,600 inhabitants, while at the last counting the number was reduced to 900. And for that reduction

—over forty per cent—he held that the school was to a great extent responsible. . . . Wherein, no doubt, he was right.¹

An item of interest with regard to the cityward migration! In addition to the mystic dreaminess where-with he is credited, the Celt, whatever his place of origin, would seem to possess, in abundant measure, the less romantic qualities necessary for the making of policemen. In the police force of the United States the Irish element has always been strong, sometimes to the point of predominance; in the police force of Glasgow there is also a strong Celtic element, deriving from the west and north. It was told me that boys in the Highlands and Islands will grow up in the laudable hope and ambition of filling out a constable's uniform.

¹ It should be added, however, that this rapid rate of decrease must not be taken as typical of the country as a whole; according to the figures of the census of 1931, the percentage of population migrating from the Highlands, though still heavy, is less than it was.

VI. THE FUTURE OF THE HIGHLANDS

'THE land question in the Highlands stands in the forefront of the many social and economic problems that call for solution in our day. In order to be at all satisfactory this question must be settled on lines that will afford food and employment to a vastly increased population. It must be arranged so as to yield a comfortable means of livelihood to thousands of our able-bodied men and women, who are to-day depending on doles, public assistance relief, or casual employment which is not nowadays easily obtained at home. . . . The land in the Highlands is not yielding its full capacity of fresh food products for the people, or for the nation. The deer forests and sheep-farms invite the reforming hand to find foothold for men rather than beasts.'¹

What is wrong with the Highlands is obvious enough: the drift from the glens of those who were born there, the transformation of once cultivated land into the waste of deer forests and grouse moor. What is not so obvious is the method of remedy; there, like doctors in every department of life, the economic doctors disagree. Some there are who believe that the tide of migration can be turned by means of new industries created by the plentiful water-power of the Highlands; such industries as have already come into being at Kinlochleven and

¹ Dr. Lachlan Grant, *A New Deal for the Highlands*.

the foot of Ben Nevis, where works have been established and employment given by the British Aluminium Company. Others there are who resent the idea of mechanization as destructive alike of beauty and of Highland tradition, and who put their faith in re-settlement on the land by means of an extensive system of small holdings. As for the possible extent of re-settlement, there are those who will tell you how, in this or that region, now inhabited by occasional crofters and shepherds, the chief of a clan could once rally his 500 claymores—all, with their womenfolk, their children, their elders, drawing their living from the soil. While, on the other hand, there are those who will assure you that the living drawn from the soil in times past was often no more than a living—its standard impossibly low according to modern ideas; and, that being so, it would be better to realize that most of the land of the Highlands must continue to lie waste—since, whatever the case with his fathers, it cannot support the twentieth-century Highlander. The truth, no doubt, lies between the two extremes; the Scottish Gael is no exception to the rule that we demand more in the way of living than our ancestors of bygone centuries; but I was told by a Highland county councillor, actively interested in the policy of land-settlement, that the newly-settled crofters in his northern county, given sufficiency of pasturage for sheep, as well as small holdings, could keep things going satisfactorily. And certain it is that, a year or two before the War, a Royal Commission reported that, out of some 3,500,000 acres of deer forest, 1,500,000 were fit for cultivation; while it is likely enough that, even a few years earlier, their estimate

of cultivable land might have been larger—as to-day it might possibly be less. For it has to be remembered—and the fact accounts for those numerous claymores of the past!—that land left uncultivated reverts to its native wild; this is not only the case with arable land, but with pasture, which is apt to deteriorate rapidly when sheep and cattle are replaced by deer. In the Report (published in 1914) of a Scottish Land Inquiry Committee one of the sections is headed ‘Deterioration through Increase of Bracken, Heather, etc.,’ and its opening paragraphs are as follows:

‘We find also that there has been much deterioration of land through growth of bracken, rough grass, heather, etc. This has been most noticable in the case of land that is used very largely for sporting purposes. With the reduction of the resident population and of sheep stocks and cattle in the interest of sport, there has proceeded a great increase in the growth of rough grass, heather, bracken, etc., so that, as a result, large areas are now losing much of their value for the carrying of cattle and sheep.

‘In the deer forests also, where there are no sheep stocks, there is great deterioration of the grasses on the lower lands, large tracts of which, formerly under cultivation, now grow what is known as “bent.” Even when sheep as well as deer are carried there is much more deterioration as a rule than where the land is well grazed by cattle; a well-known fact being that where deer feed they pick out the finer grasses, leaving the coarser to seed and multiply, and these tend to choke out the finer varieties.’

And the Report goes on to quote several of the in-

stances which had influenced its conclusions. Of these instances the following are typical:

'There is marked deterioration, not only of pasture, but what is more serious, of the arable portion of large farms through lack of cultivation. Large tracts formerly under cultivation are now choked with an overgrowth of bracken and rushes.' (Argyllshire.)

'A deterioration of the pasture of large farms and deer forests here is taking place on parts which have been at a former period under cultivation. It is caused by the growth of brackens and ferns and the continuous use of the land as grazing for sheep and deer without sufficient manuring of the land; such as would take place by its occasional cultivation as small holdings, or if it was used as grazing for a mixed stock of cattle and sheep.' (Inverness-shire.)

'The pasture in this parish that has been for a considerable number of years used in connection with large farms and deer forests is deteriorating, becoming "fog-bound," and gradually going back to its former natural state. Originally, that is before the land was used for deer forests or large farms, the land was occupied by small holders.' (Caithness.)

'There is marked deterioration of the pasture in the deer forests of this district. I have cut hay on the haugh land in several of the glens; it is now impossible to do so.' (Aberdeenshire.)

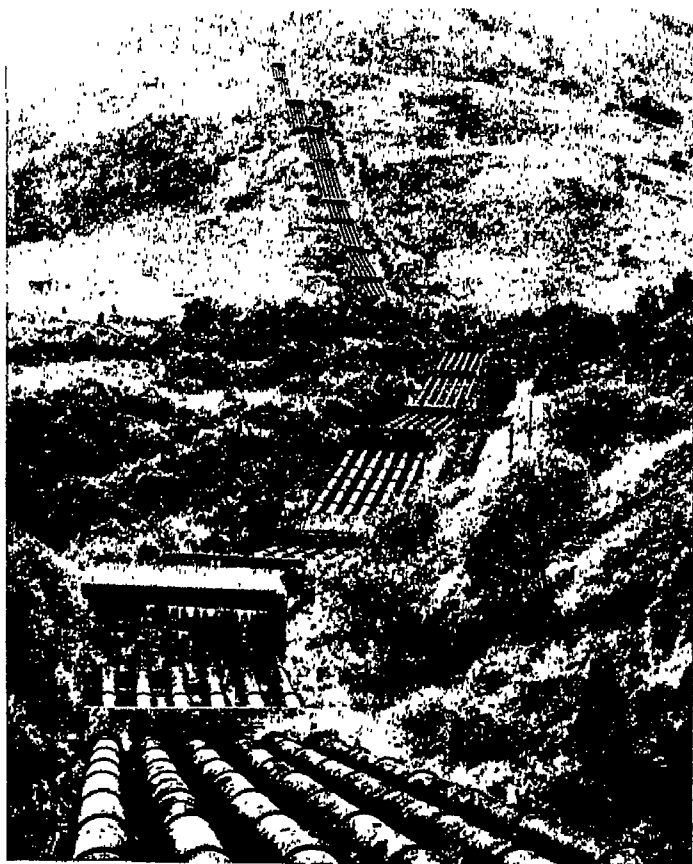
What man has loosed his hold on, Nature is swift at reclaiming; when the crofter and his cattle were evicted from the glens, in order that the landlord's sheep might graze there, the inevitable consequence was a spread of bracken and of heather; and when sheep, in their turn,

were diminished in numbers, that deer might increase, there was less and less defence against the thrust of the persistent wild. Bracken, that ruthless invader of pasture, is one of the curses of the Highlands, and of more than the Highlands; though it is there perhaps that the curse lies heaviest, because it is on hillsides that the growth is most difficult and expensive to arrest. By destroying grass it reduces a grazing area, and therefore the amount of stock that a farmer can keep on it; further, it adds to the risks and losses of sheep-farming. A 'cast' sheep, lying on its back, is unable to rise without help from its shepherd, and when hidden by bracken it may lie unseen till it dies; further, the wool of sheep which move about in bracken becomes matted in the process and therefore of less value in the market.

Sir Robert Greig, in an article dealing with 'The Menace of Bracken,'¹ speaks of the increase of the menace in the last fifty years, and adds that 'there is some truth in the saying that "Bracken is heir to the Crofter," for bracken was once under control. Rights of bracken cutting were sometimes attached to leases, so it must have had value. The long underground stems were used for thatch and the fronds for litter. When the Highlands were more densely populated, the crofter kept the pest from his arable ground and probably cleared some of the pasture. Moreover, he stocked heavily, and his cattle not only ate the young fronds but broke and trampled the mature fern. When crofting gave way to capitalist sheep-farming, bracken came into its own, for sheep are too light to injure the plant and will eat it only under stress of starvation.'

If you have no material interest in the land, I suppose

¹ *Spectator*, May 15, 1936.



J. B. White, Dundee

PIPE TRACK NEAR KINLOCHLEVEN

there can be few lovelier sights than an army of bracken, in its green of spring, marching up the side of a hill; but if you should have a material interest, you will wish more power to the scientific workers who are seeking a means to arrest that magnificent march. A gentleman who formerly lived in Galloway told me that once, on his property and thereabout, the bracken was suddenly and mysteriously afflicted with disease; the news brought biologists hurrying to the spot, in the hope of discovering the cause of the plague that was killing off the bracken of Galloway. Unfortunately—so said my informant—the disease, which was caused by a fungus, confined itself to a limited area and then died out, without revealing the secret of how its infection could be spread. So far cutting—repeated cutting, over a period of years—is the only sure means of control; and the expense of cutting when it has to be done on hill-side pastures, by the scythe, is often greater than the value of the land to be cleared. Hence the serious menace of bracken where flocks are grazed on the hills; Sir Robert Greig makes the legitimate point that it is a menace to more than the farmer—to the food-supply of the country.¹

¹ Paradoxical as it may sound, there are districts of Surrey—and maybe of other Home Counties—where the growth of London is encouraging the growth of bracken; on some of the Surrey commons it is overmastering and choking other kinds of vegetation. Here the cause is not depopulation—on the contrary—but substitution of the suburban resident for the farmer and agricultural labourer. The inhabitants of Villadom do not, like their predecessors, cut bracken for litter or turn beasts out to graze; in consequence, on one Surrey common I know, even the blackberry bushes are getting the worst of the struggle.

Dr. Lachlan Grant, whose words I have quoted at the beginning of this chapter and whose *New Deal for the Highlands* represents the policy of the Highland Development League, is not, like many of his countrymen, averse to innovation in the glens. The New Deal that he and his followers demand must begin with a thorough survey of the whole Highland area, with a view to ascertaining 'the maximum population that area can support if its resources are all fully organized and developed. Farming, fishing, tweed-making, afforestation, mineral industries, and quarrying, and all the probable local industries, should be included in the survey. Particular attention should be paid to industries likely to be based on water-power, the possibilities of this have not been fully explored.' As to the land itself, its many problems 'will have to be approached on entirely new and different lines from that of the past. For example, holdings must be set up on good agricultural soil—and of a size large enough to enable their occupants to earn a modest and comfortable living. . . . Old conceptions dealing with the land problems must be scrapped and the question approached with enthusiasm in the light of modern scientific intensive agricultural knowledge, chemistry, machinery, etc.'

There are Highlanders not a few who, from sheer love of their country and sense of its beauty, are opposed to the invasion of modern forms of industry and who think of the water-power that gives employment to hundreds at Kinlochleven and the foot of Ben Nevis, in terms of lowered lochs and dwindled rivers. True it is that Loch Laggan is not what it was in pre-aluminium days, and that the river I once saw dashing magnificently at the

outlet of Loch Treig has lost half its volume since they put up a dam and diverted the loch-flow into pipes. But for everything of value a price must be paid, and if water-power proves necessary to Highland prosperity, it may be that more of the glens will be called on to pay something of the price in their water-glory. . . . It is permissible to hope that the price will not be set too high, and that the towns and villages that grow up round mountain industry will be planned by those who have some understanding of the beauty of the glens and the possibilities of local building material. The art of industrial building has made many advances of late and it is not necessary, nowadays, for a factory to be without dignity, or for artisans' houses to be mean.

Whether or no they agree with the policy of the Highland Development League, there can, I imagine, be few thinking Highlanders who do not realize that the life of their country, if it is to prosper, needs some new direction and impetus. Details apart, what has happened to the crofters and fisherfolk of Gaeldom has happened to most of the peasant communities of Europe—and is happening to those that remain. Their way of life was evolved before the day of swift transport, when they lived as a separate community, depending for food on their own herds and fields, depending for their clothes on the spinning and weaving of their womenfolk, making most of the articles they used in daily life and combining their farming or fishing with industry on a small scale. They were, in short, a self-supporting community, but they remained self-supporting for only so long as their needs were few, and so long as their home and village industries did not come into competition

with the mass-production of the factory. Peasant life has never been wholly of the soil; it cannot exist without its accompanying small industries; and when those industries are swamped by the factory, the life itself begins to go. There are districts in Provence where cottages stand empty and fields are going out of cultivation because the small village industry of silk is a thing of the past; driven off the market by the town manufacturers, with their facilities for wider distribution and purchase. The epoch of rural self-sufficiency has passed; the small farmer of to-day is more and more in touch with the outside world—he buys from it, sells to it, has need of it. He is more of a farmer, less of a peasant, than his forebears—and the change is not merely one of title.¹

What the Highland Development League demands in the way of assistance—chiefly from the Government—is summarized by Dr. Lachlan Grant as follows:

1. To ascertain the acreage of cultivable land in each county.

¹ Johnson and Boswell, on their journey to the Hebrides, stayed on one occasion at a house 'built of thick turfs, and thatched with inner turfs and heath. It had three rooms in length and a little room which projected. Where we sat, the side-walls were wainscoted . . . with wicker, very neatly plaited. Our landlord had made the whole with his own hands.' Peasant communities, all the world over, have been accustomed to build their own houses; when, owing to a rising standard of comfort, the practice is discontinued and paid builders are called in, the community immediately becomes less self-supporting, more dependent on the price that a market will pay for its produce. And in a predominantly industrial country, such as our own, where cheap food for the townsman is the first consideration, the price is not always very high.

2. A division of this land into economic holdings, each capable of supporting a family in security and comfort.

3. Adequate transport facilities to open up this land, and adequate grants in aid of settlement.

4. Intensive tactful propaganda by lecture, leaflet, wireless broadcast, and other means on the best methods of cultivation to be pursued.

5. An exact understanding of how agricultural earnings could be augmented by supplementary occupations, e.g. fishing, poultry farming, and pig rearing, silviculture, quarrying of minerals, handicrafts, tweeds, and woollen manufacture, etc. Films have a great educative value and could now be greatly used.

6. The most careful estimate of the total cost, including modernizing of villages, transport by road, schools, etc.

7. Schools in remote areas to be provided at public expense with up-to-date wireless sets, a special broadcasting station for the Highlands for broadcasting (as mentioned) lectures on latest methods for cultivating and getting best results from the soil, on Highland and Scottish history, the history of the Gaelic language, its music and culture, and all kinds of ideas aiming at the fullest development in the economic and social life of the people. The time is opportune for a complete recasting of Highland education. The ancient crafts, dyeing, tweed-making, metal work, could be restored by their inclusion among the practical subjects in Highland schools. A sound knowledge of literary, as apart from colloquial, Gaelic should be acquired by every secondary school pupil.

8. In the granting of land, or any other facilities,

preference should be given to the Highland people and their connections, and especially to Gaelic-speaking families. In allocating holdings in each county, it would be advisable to give a preference to natives of that county. And should there be any surplus holdings in any part of the Highland area, these should be available to Highlanders from urban areas, after which consideration could be given to Lowland Scots with a knowledge of agricultural work, and overseas Highlanders who wished to return to the mother country. Having ascertained the approximate cost of reconditioning the whole Highland life, a grant sufficient to meet the requirements should be made. Such grant would be spread over a period of years, and should not be subject to modification or alteration by change of Government.

Did the Government decide to finance such a scheme, it would be possible—so Dr. Grant believes—to settle 30,000 families in the Highlands; and the aim of the Highland Development League is to rouse public interest in the project for re-settlement. 'The State must find the money to repair the damage that has been done, to re-people derelict lands and to re-equip and re-educate the people. . . . In other words, the fallacies of the last two centuries must be abandoned and the Scottish nation must go all out to retain as many as possible within its own borders.'

The reclamation of the Highland wastes needs more than State grants and skilled administration thereof; its first essential is the right type of man to settle on the waste reclaimed. Of the thousands of Highlanders who

have drifted south, and drifted overseas, how many would be willing to return to the life of the glen? A large proportion of Glasgow's citizens are of Highland blood, and many among them must be Highland born; but it would certainly be a mistake to assume that the majority of even the Highland-born would be willing, if the choice were given them, to forsake the street for the heather. Not all those who dream sentimentally of 'the lone shieling of the misty island' would be willing to return there for life, and there are many Highland exiles who do not even dream sentimentally. A Scots-woman of my acquaintance told me recently how she had met, as fellow-traveller, a resident in one of the meaner streets of Glasgow who revealed, in the course of their journeying conversation, that she had been born and bred in one of the loveliest of the Scottish Islands. She went on to recount the manner of her leaving it; her father, a blacksmith with a family of thirteen, came to the conclusion that he and his swarming brood would do better in Canada than in their native land, so he and the working members of the brood managed to put by enough money to pay for the Atlantic passages of one and all. The first stage of the Canadian journey was a move to Glasgow; the first stage and, as it proved, the only one; the whole of that family, parents and children, were so pleased with the mean streets of Glasgow that they settled down there for good. When the blacksmith's daughter was asked what were the particular attractions that induced the family to change its plans, the answer was that they liked the people and the place—and apparently none of them had any great regret for the familiar beauty they had left.

Of all sections and classes of the human race, the most difficult to produce, by act of man, is the class of peasant-proprietor. Peers are created by the word of a monarch, soldiers can be made by the law of the land and the drill-sergeant, and industrialism, without any difficulty, creates factory hands by the million. Propaganda and the teacher can turn out unthinking partisans; while with very little encouragement large numbers of human beings will acquire the routine, unoriginal mentality of the minor official—acquire it easily and willingly. But the class that sows and reaps its own few acres on its own responsibility, that does not stop milking or harvesting at the stroke of a clock: that class is not created by act of man, it grows like the product of its labour, and its arts, as a rule, are handed on from father to son. . . . And that fact, in all probability, represents the most serious difficulty in the way of Highland resettlement and a policy of 'Back to the Land!'¹

¹ A friend of my own has talked with an old man, a dweller in the island of Mull, whose memory went back to the day when his village community was, in very truth, self-supporting. It had practically no commerce with the outside world, or traffic in factory-made goods; its members grew their own corn and ground it with their own handmills, after the manner of the ancients. They caught their own fish and the garments they wore were the products of their own looms and spinning-wheels. Whatever the disadvantages of this restricted way of life (and the average town-dweller would find them unbearable) it had at least one important advantage over the swarming industrial community with its innumerable sources of livelihood and complicated systems of trade. Its economics are comprehensible by more than the expert, being based on certain facts and conditions wherewith those who live by the soil and the sea are familiar from their earliest years; on fertility of soil and yield of the sea and the

It has always been difficult to persuade the citizen to leave the labour of the street for that of the countryside, and to-day there are circumstances, tendencies, and doctrines which make it more difficult than ever. To take doctrine first, there is the spread of the Socialist idea and ideal, with its antagonism to private property and preference for the wage-earning status; how far that would act as a deterrent to land settlement, it is, of course, impossible even to guess; but, as a frequent manifestation of the urban *Zeitgeist*, it must, I think, be counted in as a difficulty. Then it is a fact, observed by many and vouched for officially, that the younger generation of urban workers is often unwilling to leave its familiar surroundings and will prefer lengthy spells of unemployment to a certain wage elsewhere. This juvenile homekeeping spirit is not confined to any one region of Great Britain; it has been noted in Scotland, in England, and in Wales—and is common to both girls and boys. A tough old McAndrew, just home from a voyage with whom I once travelled for an hour or two, told me that the shipping branch of engineering was no longer attracting the young men of Clydeside; they

daily labour of men's hands. The plenty or scarcity of such a community results from good or bad weather; not from the pulling of mysterious strings, the operation of mysterious forces whose edicts, known as the boom and the slump, now hand out a comfortable wage to the town-dweller, now send him to hang at street corners. All the same, nowadays there are few of us who, of the two ways of living, would not prefer dependence on the mysterious forces, however arbitrary their workings and decrees . . . though it may be, before many decades have passed, those who are left of us after the next war, will be gathering together in little communities where life will be lived as it was, until yesterday, in remoter regions of Scotland.

preferred engineering jobs ashore. Then on one occasion I visited an unemployment centre for girls in one of the smaller towns on the Clyde—an admirably-run institution where girls from fourteen to eighteen, when out of a job, received instruction in household arts and attended gym and singing classes. When I asked the superintendent what type of work the girls usually obtained, I was told that what most of them considered preferable was the shop; if work behind the counter was not obtainable, then the next best thing was the factory; while last in the general estimation came work in the house—domestic service. Most of them, however, were obliged, in the end, to accept this third alternative; the town being a small one, the call both for factory and shopgirls was limited; and their choice of employment was the more restricted by the fact that, almost without exception, they were reluctant to take work at a distance from home. Glasgow, with an easy train service, was not more than twenty miles away; but (so the superintendent assured me) her girls had again and again refused good openings found for them in Glasgow.¹

It would be interesting to fathom the reasons for this widespread reluctance to migrate—this limpet-like quality on the part of the younger generation. Has our system of education anything to do with it? Or is it also an instinctive reaction against the international idea,

¹ The *Evening Standard* of October 22, 1936, reports a Ministry of Labour official as follows: 'In Scotland there were 11,000 unemployed boys, and in Wales 8,000. Many of those in Wales had never had a job since they left school. . . . Providing they were suitable, as most of them would be, we could fill much of the gap in the juvenile employment market if we could persuade those boys to move to other districts.'

a return to something like tribalism? Or is it that the adventurous and restless strain of our people has, through decade after decade, been drained away by emigration, so that now the less adventurous strain predominates? This last seems a possible explanation; the unduly large percentage of mental disease in the Highlands is, I believe, explained by the fact that the weaker stock is often left behind when the stronger goes out to seek its fortune. And with the weaker stock there will certainly be left the less enterprising! Be the cause what it may, we have here an influence that is working for local separatism.

All systems, however excellent in theory, are harmful carried to excess; it is not necessary, therefore, to share the Socialist objection to property in land in order to realize the evil of excessive ownership. Absentee landlordism wherever found—or perhaps one should say, wherever not found—has always been a breeder of trouble; whereas a landlord class, when it does live on its own, is usually far from unpopular. In Ireland recently a member of the class told me that his part of the country had always been singularly free from agrarian disorder; ‘but then,’ he added, ‘there is very little absenteeism—the people round here have always lived on their estates.’ La Vendée, where a French peasantry rose eagerly in defence of the old régime and against the Republic, was a district of resident landowners—it is the absentee and his representatives who are apt to rouse the hatred of a countryside. And even when the absentee and his representatives—his agents or factors—mean, and do, well by the property and those who dwell on it; even so, the absentee is an absentee and

it is hard to think there is not something wrong in the possession of stretches of God's good earth which their owner makes use of merely as a playground, for a few short weeks in the year. A man, I think, is entitled to own what he loves; not only ethically entitled but also economically, for what he loves he will care for and desire to make prosper. Whatever the sins of a land-owning aristocracy it has seldom or never been unmindful of beauty in its dwellings and surroundings—beauty which our crowded democracy of to-day is all too often destroying with complete indifference. But the men who built with dignity and planted with taste were not as a rule absentees; they planted and built where they lived. . . . What a man does not love sufficiently to live with—to that he has little moral right.

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One source of Highland prosperity, by no means fully tapped, is the traffic and service of the tourist. It is a statement one makes with a certain reluctance for fear lest it should suggest to some benevolent, mechanically-minded official the provision of more roads of the Glencoe type for the benefit of motorists in general, and charabancs in particular, on their week-end rushes through the north. Far be it from me to object to the speedy joys of my fellow-creatures; but as their joys are of speed and not of contemplation, as the essence of their pleasure is the being whirled past beauty, not the lingering in its company, one mountain landscape must be much like another in their eyes! The motorist who tours for the sake of the country does not wish to rush through it at top speed; and that being so, it is surely

unnecessary to offer facilities of arterial road in all those regions of the Scottish Highlands whose loveliness is made the more lovely by quiet and sense of seclusion.

The number of Scots, and especially Highlanders, who let their houses in the holiday season must amount to a considerable percentage of the population; it is not only the possessors of shooting rights, or of property adjacent to golf courses, who turn out in order to augment their incomes—the crofter in possession of a comfortable cottage will also remove himself and his family for the sake of a holiday rent. As to what becomes of himself and his family during the let, it is probably better, in a good many cases, that sanitary authority should not inquire too closely, since they are understood to bestow themselves in the outhouse accommodation of the croft—which, as regards cubic space, etc., will hardly comply with regulation. All the same, as farmers and farmers' children will usually spend their day out of doors, the close-packing at night is unlikely to do them much harm—while the summer's rent may mean all the difference between hard-up-ness and reasonable comfort for the family.

There is one class of tourist whose needs, in the Highlands as elsewhere, are being increasingly catered for by that excellent institution, the Youth Hostel (for whose inception all young hikers owe a debt to Germany).¹ At time of writing (1936) some fifty

¹ And especially to the schoolmaster Richard Schirrmann who, on tramp with his Westphalian schoolboys in 1909, first hit on the idea of hostels as a way of overcoming the difficulty of nightly lodging for a company of vagabonds.

hostels are scattered throughout Scotland, about half of the number being situated in country north of the Highland line. As in other regions that cater for the footslogger, the housing provided is of varied character; the handbook issued by the Scottish Youth Hostels Association includes in its list of buildings a castle in Ayrshire, described as 'magnificent,' various cottages on the shores of Highland lochs, old schoolhouses, and even old churches—which presumably have ceased to serve their original purpose by reason of the drift of population. There are, I suppose, few regions of the earth in which walking is a greater delight than in the Scottish Highlands and the one obstacle to its enjoyment hitherto has been a lack of the cheap accommodation which is now supplied by the hostel. Hiking, it is to be hoped, is more than a fashion since, even when undertaken by groups who have no desire for solitude, it is a corrective of many of the failings of the city-bred—and some of the companies I saw on the road were of obvious city-bred type. Good for them to reach one of the remoter hostels where water does not come for the turning of a tap but has to be carried from the burn; good for them to face the weather on a road instead of a street, and to do for a season without the accustomed cinema. And good for them, too, if they acquire that respect for the countryside which their association seeks to instil into its members. That essential respect; for, as the association rightly insists: 'With the increasing enjoyment of the countryside . . . the necessity for a knowledge of the fire danger is becoming greater.' And the fire danger to-day, in many districts of Scotland, is a threat to valuable State property; the 100,000

acres and 100,000,000 trees that, in the last few years, have been planted by the Forestry Commission.

With regard to the building of hotels, and similar developments of Highland tourist traffic, there is, if I mistake not, a somewhat cautious enthusiasm on the part of some among those who are planning their country's prosperity; the reason for this comparative absence of enthusiasm being a fear lest their country should decline into nothing but a playground, with a resident population of ghillies and waiters and guides. The dislike of such a destiny is laudable as well as comprehensible; there is something unhealthy in the atmosphere of a land which exists only for the purpose of ministering to pleasure. (I have heard Frenchmen, for that reason, regret the existence of their Riviera.) In the view of those who would restore the country, too great an extent of it, at the present day, exists only for the benefit of the sportsman; it will be a change of degree and not of kind if the sporting pleasures of the few are curtailed not for the advantage of industry or farming, but merely in order to substitute the holiday pleasures of the many. I have heard it said that catering for pleasure is a trade both legitimate and useful; but a people which specializes in catering for pleasure, to the exclusion of more normal aspects of life, is a people of distorted values.

Something there may be in that point of view, but it is not that of the practical man who is well aware of the value of his summer visitors—and that the tourist trade, as it exists to-day, is bringing more than good money to the Highland innkeeper. As communications improve and

more districts are opened up as holiday resorts, there is increased employment in the motor industry, employment which tends to check the 'Drift to the South.' And another result (as Mr. Evan M. Barron points out) is that 'country dwellers have begun to realize their opportunities in this direction, and to effect improvements in their houses and cottages in order to attract visitors.' 'Anything,' he says again, 'that will tend to ameliorate the curse of isolation will tend to keep our people in the Highlands'—and the curse of isolation is lifted by the advent of the visitor. (This extreme of loneliness is, in many districts, a purely modern phenomenon; before the Clearances, when crofts stood thick in many of the glens, the average Highlander must have had companionship at will.)

Of late years more than one agency has been at work to lessen the curse of isolation. Remoteness, even in the winter glens, ceases to be wholly remote in the company of a wireless set; and although wide districts in the north and west are still badly served in the matter of roads, there has been much recent improvement, alike in quantity and quality. If the hopes of the Highland Development League are to be fulfilled, and 30,000 families settled in the country to make their living by the croft and rural industry, many secondary roads and passable lanes will have to be driven into districts that are now inaccessible to everything that goes on wheels. Such improved communication is a necessity if the country is to flourish, but it is as well to face the fact that in the Highlands, as elsewhere, it is bound to bring about a decline in the old rural industries; when towns are made accessible and drapers' vans carry their wares



GLENCOE AND THE NEW ROAD

Andrew Patterson, Intowness

to the glens, the loom no longer works for home consumption. The homespun industry is already to a certain extent commercialized; business methods have been introduced with the inevitable result that the solitary weaver is finding it difficult to compete with large-scale production. Another result of commercialization is that for some purposes, at any rate, aniline dye is superseding vegetable; I tried in many Scottish wool-shops this year to buy knitting-wool of the beautiful yellow that you get with a vegetable dye; but all in vain—they had nothing but the harsher aniline. The reason given for the disappearance of vegetable colouring was its greater liability to fade; but I imagine that the trouble-factor has something to do with the change. Then, in Scotland as in England, the younger generation does not as a rule take kindly to the arts and crafts of its fathers; in one of the Highland Industries depots the superintendent showed me a chair of a make peculiar to Orkney and told me there was now only one man who could turn out a chair like that. And that, she added, was not the only craft that was dwindling for lack of new workers.

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The Highlander, like his cousin the Irishman, does not always respond to the advances of those who seek to be his benefactors and set him on the path of progress. A reminder of that fact is to be found in the Outer Isles; for in Harris, I believe, there are still to be seen the rows of idle sheds and the empty warehouses erected hopefully by the late Lord Leverhulme—with the intention of bringing new prosperity to the Hebrides by the organization of their fisheries. Those sheds and

warehouses mark the grave of a stillborn enterprise; they signal an English defeat in its way as decisive as Bannockburn! The stubborn conservatism of the men of the Isles was roused to opposition by the innovations, well meant though they were, of an English captain of industry; till the captain of industry, acknowledging defeat, gave up the struggle and his projects for Hebridean betterment. So far as the outsider may venture to judge, the fundamental cause of the disaster was merely that the ways of benevolent industry, as practised in England, did not appeal to the fishing-trade, as practised in the Hebrides. . . . 'We may wonder,' writes George Blake,¹ 'at the precise nature of the forces that obliged a very active and able and generous man to retire from the fray. Was it mere local resentment of the Sassenach intrusion? Was it laziness, as some cruelly say? Or was it—and this is a question of immense interest and importance—the clash of a romantic and aristocratic with a realistic and acquisitive tradition? All the elements suggested were probably behind that sensational defeat of industrialism: one of the most significant episodes in Scottish history. But we have to give the Highlander credit for a distinguished philosophy at the back of his behaviour in this strange business. It was no doubt unconscious, but it told him that the making of money is not all, and that it profits a man nothing if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul at the same time.' . . . The moral, perhaps, of the whole strange business being, that when it comes to details of his country's betterment, the Englishman will do well to take a step back while the Highlander deals with the Highlander!

¹ In *The Heart of Scotland*.

VII. THE NATIONALIST MOVEMENT AND ITS ORIGINS

EVEN though Scotsmen themselves do not always take it seriously, it would be impossible to write honestly of Scotland to-day and ignore its modern phenomenon of Nationalism; which, south of the Tweed, does not as a rule rouse much interest—save, perhaps, among party politicians at election times, when the intrusion into Scottish constituencies of Nationalist candidates, however ill supported, means diversion of votes from the older parties and added uncertainty of result.

Impossible also to consider it as an isolated phenomenon, purely local in its origins; the impulse that stirs the Scot to his separatism is stirring other races to theirs. All the world over, these last few years, crowd-emotion has been swirling in two main currents—the international current and the national. It would not be greatly incorrect to say that each came into being, as effective force, by way of reaction from the other. Internationalism derived its sudden access of post-war strength from the torment wrought, from end to end of Europe, by a four-years strife between the nations: humanity had agonized in the name of nationality—which must straightway be made an end of, lest the agony be suffered anew! It was natural enough in that first revulsion from supreme catastrophe that the symptom should be confounded with the cause, the fever

with its rash—the human fighting impulse with one of its manifestations. Disillusion came, as it was bound to come, with gradual, unwilling realization of the fact that the human being would fight for other reasons than defence of his national frontiers—that he was liable to fight with enthusiasm against men of his own race and speech; and, as time went on, the other awkward fact that internationalism means the minding of other people's business—and the minding of other people's business proved not nearly so easy a job as it had appeared in the dawn of international enthusiasm. Inevitably the result of lost faith in the internationalist gospel was a revival of nationalism; a revival which, in its sane and healthy aspect, is an attempt to discover the manageable unit of government. The homogeneous country whose needs and aspirations can be understood by those who have been bred in its tradition; the race, not the world-wide agglomeration of incomprehensible races. Nationalism, in its sane and healthy aspect, does not necessarily imply an ideal of racial domination; it may stand for the small-scale manageable, as opposed to the unwieldiness of large-scale expansion, whether international or imperial. . . . Between these two forms of expansion there is less difference than some of their ardent votaries imagine; the one, like the other, is a product of that urge to the grandiose, the vast, which from time to time will tempt democracies, as well as dictators, with a dream of far-flung power and a world submissive to one rule.

Edwin Muir,¹ to whom Capitalism appears to be the prime enemy, and who therefore has small faith in mere Nationalism as a remedy for his country's ills, yet sees

¹ In *Scottish Journey*.

in it a natural effort to counteract the many modern forces that make for a cosmopolitan sameness of character. In Scotland, as elsewhere, the movies, the microphone, and the popular newspaper are widening the national outlook—widening but also shallowing. Certainly, as Edwin Muir points out, these ubiquitous influences do not make for variety and originality of character; and though he himself regards this unifying process as inevitable, others, less resigned to the passing of Scottish tradition and character, are striving to preserve them through nationalism. 'Though Scotland,' he writes, 'has not been a nation for some time, it has possessed a distinctly marked style of life; and that' (under the influence of Anglicization) 'is now falling to pieces, for there is no visible and effective power to hold it together. There is such a visible and effective power to conserve the life of England; and though in English life, too, a similar change of national characteristics is going on, though the old England is disappearing, there is no danger that England should cease to be itself. But all that Scotland possesses is its style of life; once it loses that it loses everything and is nothing more than a name on a map.' . . . He adds ironically that, as regards the aims of Scottish Nationalism, 'the unfortunate thing for Scotland is that it is not an obviously oppressed nation, as Ireland was, but only a visibly depressed one searching for the source of its depression. Glencoe and Culloden are things of the distant past, useful perhaps for a peroration or the refrain of a song, but with no bearing on the present state of things, since everybody can see the English and the Scots living side by side in peace. . . . Yet in spite of that Scotland is as urgently in

need of independence as Ireland was. More urgently, indeed, for if she does not get it she will lose her national consciousness, as Ireland would never have done.'

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A point to be noted with regard to the urge towards national or racial separatism; it would seem to be strongest in those peoples which have hitherto failed to attain a national coherence. To attain, that is to say, the degree of unity in law and outlook which distinguishes the nation proper from the union of tribes or feudatories. In Germany, where the urge is at present most vehement, nationality—the one and indivisible Reich—is a creation of yesterday; long after France and England had attained to their unity of law and outlook, forms of government which were practically tribal persisted in Germany and her peoples were subject to separate sources of authority. It was less than fifty years before the outbreak of the Great War that rival tribes of the German race—Hessians, Bavarians, Saxons, and Prussians—stood armed against each other in the struggle of 1866. Italy, another example of violent nationalism, is also another example of a people disunited; a people that has behind it a long history of foreign domination and the feuds of minor principalities. And 'A nation once again!' runs the song of the Irish patriot; but if the people of Ireland had ever been really a nation—ever been more than warring septs enclosed within the narrow limits of an island—then, in all probability, there would be less of intensity, less idealistic fury in their aspiration towards unity.

Scotland, then, has to be considered as a similar, if

less violent, example of a people which has never been completely a nation: the people of Scotland, paradoxically enough, was never securely at peace with itself until after it had accepted the Act of Union and linked its fortunes with those of the rest of the island. Long after England had disciplined her feudatories to acknowledge the rule of the king and his central authority, the septs of the Lowlands and clans of the Highlands lived in semi-independence, maintained by the sword; waging war against their neighbour when they so desired and, often enough, against their king. Scotland, in short, remained at the tribal stage of development long after England had outgrown it; and in addition to her local rivalries and feuds there was the main division—its markings still visible—between the Lowlands and the Highlands. As has been pointed out in an earlier chapter, in the Highlands, until after the Forty-Five, landed property was owned and administered on a system older than the feudal—the military-paternal system of the clan. For all his authority over his tribesmen—his power of justice and leadership in war—the head of a clan did not own his territories; he was chief, not landlord, holding it in trust for the welfare of his Camerons or Macdonalds. When rebellion had been crushed on the field of Culloden, an alarmed British government, not without excuse, decided to abolish the system of land tenure that had made rebellion formidable; and the chief, deprived of his patriarchal status—his right of administering justice taken over by the courts—was reduced to the rank of a laird.

It was, then, less than two hundred years ago that the clan form of government—the patriarchal-military—

came to an end in the Highlands of Scotland; and although in a new country, such as the United States of America, or an industrial region, such as the Black Country, two hundred years would be more than ample to efface its influence, in rural districts memories and traditions die hard; more especially in mountainous districts where little communities live secluded from their fellows and thrown upon their own resources. Even in these days there is still a line drawn between the Highlands and the Lowlands and the problems, economic and social, of the one are not always the problems of the other.

The development of a community, whatever it may call itself—nation, class, or church—would seem to be subject to certain laws of growth, as regular in their working as those which govern the individuals whereof it is composed. If the community is to live and flourish, it must strive to attain a certain measure of coherence; that is to say, it must subdue and discipline those of its elements that by nature tend to conflict, make them aware of their common interest and weld them into conscious union. In the case of a nation the elements that have to be welded into one are its tribes or clans and semi-independent feudatories; their powers, as nationality attains to its fulfilment, are superseded by one central authority and overruled by one law. Nationality, far from being the one and only cause of warfare—as the well-meaning ignorant has been known to assert—is in origin a movement far more pacifist than militarist; supported by men of pacific intent not as a means to war and domination but as a remedy for local bloodshed. National wars are a late development of

the combative habit; the human being, left to himself, does not fight with the foreigner, the man he does not know, but with his neighbour with whom it is easy to find causes of quarrel. Hence it is the first task of tribal government to prevent the blood-quarrel amongst members of the tribe and direct the fighting impulse upon those and those only who dwell outside its borders. That is to say, to direct it against those who, being met less frequently, give less frequent occasion for combat. . . . The nation, as we understand it, was an entity of slow historical growth, its progress impeded again and again by the reluctance of minor principalities and powers to resign the cherished independence that gave them a right of private war. The statesmen—the Richelieus, Cavours, and Bismarcks—whose aim was a nation consciously unified and at peace within its own borders; these men in their time had to strive with difficulties of the same nature as those which have hitherto proved beyond the strength of supporters of the League of Nations. And the League of Nations—if it should ever become a reality—will only be a further development of the process which produced the nation; the process of increasing security by increasing the area wherein it is forbidden to shed blood.

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Like all other 'isms, Scottish Nationalism is of varying intensities. In its milder form it seems to desire no more than increased powers of local government, as a remedy for present congestion at Westminster—to which, rightly or wrongly, the Nationalist attributes some of Scotland's industrial disadvantages and grievances.

In its more thoroughgoing manifestations it waves the Scottish Lion against the Union Jack and assembles on the field of Bannockburn to the tune of *Scots wha hae!*

The first principle of the Scottish National Party is 'the establishment of a Parliament in Scotland which shall be the final authority on all Scottish affairs, including taxation and finance'; and there can be little doubt that the demand for control in matters of finance has been strengthened during the lean years of depression—it remains to be seen whether improving trade will lessen it. From industrial depression springs discontent which is inevitably directed against existing forms of authority and often enough produces a demand for drastic change; the same atmosphere that has favoured the rise of Scottish Nationalism has also fostered the growth of the redder type of Clydeside Socialism. 'It is obvious,' (I quote from a programme issued by the Scottish National Party,¹) 'it is obvious that only a Scottish Parliament will have the time, the knowledge, and the determination to carry out that searching inquiry into all phases of Scotland's economic and social problems which is an essential preliminary to remedial measures. Only a Scottish Government, elected and supported by the people of Scotland, will have the power and authority to translate the results of such an inquiry into decisive action. Legislation to-day requires intensive treatment. . . . The so-called failure of democracy is largely due to the fact that democratic institutions have not been sufficiently speedy or adapted to the complexities of modern government. Both

¹ *Scottish Reconstruction*, by Sir Alexander M. MacEwen, Y. M. MacCormick, and T. H. Gibson.

Government and Parliament are breaking down under the burden of congestion. A Scottish Parliament, using modern business methods, and composed of men accustomed to practical affairs, will be able to function with efficiency and authority.' . . . Once such a Parliament has come into being, the first task of self-governing Scotland is to be a thorough, scientific survey of the country's industries, with the object of reducing unemployment and so arresting the 'Drift to the South'—the attraction of England for the Scot. As to the means whereby these ends may be obtained: 'A Scottish Government,' say the framers of the programme, 'would consider the advisability of national control of public transport; and would certainly insist on Scottish control.' As regards both the agricultural and the fishing community, they point out that conditions in Scotland differ greatly from those in England, and the same objection is brought against the Town Planning Acts—they were framed to meet English conditions. While as for the countryside, its natural beauty and the finest traditions of Scottish architecture are not likely to be best preserved and stimulated by 'a Scottish Office in Whitehall, largely manned by English civil servants.'¹

In the pamphlet from which I have quoted above there is no expression of antagonism towards England; its tone throughout is pro-Scottish, not anti-English; the object of its authors' dislike is the connection with England—the partnership and not the partner. I should

¹ Since the above was published, the grievance of a Scottish office in Whitehall is less acute: the Scottish office has in part removed itself to Edinburgh, a change which, I have been given to understand, is appreciated by other than Nationalists.

add that more than once, in speaking with Nationalists, I have heard that lack of antagonism insisted on. But, as in all movements, the moderates do not stand alone, and it would be useless to deny that there are those whose arguments are couched in less amiable terms; who see in England not merely the partner in an undesired connection but something like the villain of the piece—the over-greedy partner who drains Scotland of sustenance by pocketing more than his share of the common purse. And whether or no its arguments be justified by history, the appearance of this anti-English element in Scottish Nationalism should occasion no surprise; all movements are the better for an enemy against whom to rally their ranks. Resentment—sense of injury—adds force to any agitation; hence promoters of agitation, more or less consciously, must desire a convenient evildoer whose misdeeds will rouse the indignant enthusiasm of their followers. And the convenient evildoer, in this matter of the Union, is and must be England.

As an example of what may be called the emotional argument for breaking the partnership, I quote from a pamphlet by Charles Stewart Black, *Scottish Nationalism, its Inspiration and its Aims*. (Be it noted, I use the word emotional in no derogatory sense; I mean only that Mr. Black's appeal in the following passage is to patriotic indignation rather than material advantage.)

'From the beginning,' it runs, 'Scotland has accepted the full responsibility of her position as a member of the United Kingdom; she has submerged her own individuality and "played the game." England has never made the slightest attempt to do likewise. . . . To her, Britain does not exist; it is some imaginary place, a delusion to

which Scotsmen have an absurd attachment, the misguided idiots! Those Scots and Welsh are tiresome nuisances, with their continual prating about Britain. What are they anyhow? Poor insignificant creatures who should be humbly grateful if they are accepted as Englishmen. That is the Englishman's faith and he is proud of it. . . . Modestly suggest to him that it was a Scot who led the British armies to victory in 1918, that it was another Scot who received the surrender of the German Battle Fleet, and that half a million other Scots had more than a little to do with the winning of the war, and he will bestow a condescending smile of consideration on your foolish obsession. . . . Only England matters; only England really exists.'

When one remembers how completely, of late years, the word Englishman has been superseded by Briton in the daily Press—presumably in deference to the wishes of those who dwell beyond the Tweed—when, I say, one remembers that, some of the above accusations seem a little sweeping. Still, my purpose here is to record, not to refute, and my reason for recording Mr. Black's views is that they are, I conclude, to a certain extent representative; if they had been peculiar to himself, the pamphlet containing them would hardly have been published by the Scottish National Party. In justice to himself and to those who think as he does, I should add that in another passage he is at pains to assure his readers that there is no danger that Scottish Nationalism will develop a hate-cult of England on Irish lines. 'The Southern Irish,' he writes, 'have inherited an antipathy to England which varies in degree from a definite prejudice to a deep hatred. To many of them

the very name of England is anathema. No such feeling exists in Scotland, and there is not the slightest danger of the development there of an extreme and narrow Nationalism such as is exhibited by certain Irishmen.'

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I have said there are varying degrees and shades of Scottish Nationalism, and the movement, no doubt, like all other movements, is divided in counsels, produces its extremists, and likewise its hot-headed theorists; but the responsible leaders of its most important section have been careful to insist that they ask for no more than 'independent national status within the British Group of Nations.' And at a conference of the party, in 1933, its principles were summarized under the following heads:

The establishment of a Parliament in Scotland which shall be the final authority on all Scottish affairs, including taxation and finance.

Scotland shall share with England the rights and responsibilities they, as Mother Nations, have jointly created and incurred within the British Empire.

The National Party of Scotland believes that, in a manner representing the will of her people, Scotland should set up jointly with England machinery to deal with these responsibilities and in particular with such matters as Defence and Foreign Policy and the creation of a Customs Union.

The National Party of Scotland believes that these principles can be realized only by an independent political party which has no connection or alliance with any English-controlled party.

Such is the official pronouncement of the National Party; and this straightforward statement, says Mr. Stewart Black, 'should silence for ever the allegation that Scottish Nationalists are working for the break-up of the British Commonwealth.' He goes on to characterize as 'a dastardly lie' the other allegation sometimes brought against the movement, that it is disloyal to the Crown. 'It is in virtue of his Scottish descent, as well as his English, that the king is seated on his throne. The only change we might welcome would be to see him crowned at Scone as well as at Westminster.'¹

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To suggest—as I suggested earlier in this chapter—that Scottish Nationalism is essentially part of a far wider movement is not to deny local influence on its rise and progress. Slump and its consequence hit Scotland hard; was bound to hit her hard, since many of her major industries are of the type that, all the world over, suffered most heavily in the long years of depression. Hence her percentage of unemployment has been higher than that of Great Britain as a whole; and, in spite of the fact that industrial areas south of the Tweed have suffered as heavily as industrial Scotland, there has been a tendency—perhaps inevitable—to make Nationalist capital out of the country's distresses. Again it is pointed out that the new British industries that have established themselves in the last few years—motor and gramophone industries, for instance—have usually grouped themselves in southern England, many in the neighbourhood of London. The fact is undeniable;

¹ See Note B. Nationalist Symbols.

suburban London is becoming industrialized and factories are covering what once were the fields of the Home Counties; but the Scot, when he resents this shifting of industry, is apt to forget that it is not only a Scottish grievance—the North of England has been just as heavily hit.

Then (as Nationalism has not failed to note) Scotland, as far as employment is concerned, has suffered, and suffered heavily, by the rationalizing process, as applied to railways. Amalgamation of Scottish with English railway systems has meant the transfer to English building and repairing sheds of work once carried out in Scotland. In the town of Inverness, for instance, railway requirements, of one kind or another, used to give work and wage to close upon 2,000 men; to-day, it is said, the number of railway employees in the Highland capital has dropped to somewhere about fifty. And the same thing with locomotive building in Scotland which, at one time, employed between nine and ten thousand men; nowadays, with the disappearance of most of the Scottish locomotive works, there is work for less than a quarter of that number. There can, of course, be no question that the competition of road transport made an overhaul of our railway systems necessary; but it is equally undeniable that the economies of centralization meant inevitable hardship for thousands of Scottish railway workers. . . . And another grievance on the same lines—whether justified or the reverse I know not—is, that in the day of naval retrenchment, all the English dockyards remained in being, while Rosyth on the Forth was scrapped. That meant, of course, the loss to Scotland of naval repair work and the money it brought into



Andrew Paterson, Inverness

LOCH NESS AND CASTLE URQUHART

the country. And as with the Navy, so with the Army and Air Force; in each case it is urged, by the nationally inclined, that too few units are quartered where they can spend their money in Scottish shops and be provided for by Scottish contractors.

Yet another complaint I have come across in Nationalist publications; that Englishmen, in growing numbers, are obtaining lucrative employment north of the Tweed; that they are claiming an increasing proportion of the better-paid administrative posts! I can venture no opinion as to whether that complaint is justified; but even if it be, I suggest, with all deference, that it would be possible to bring a countercharge? A glance at the London telephone directory should convince even the most ardent Scottish patriot that the Englishman seeking a livelihood in Scotland is but following the example of the countless Scots who have sought and obtained their livelihood on English soil.¹

It must not be supposed that I have given anything like the full tale of those Scottish disadvantages which the Nationalist ascribes to the union of Scotland with England; but if I do not here lengthen the list of grievances, it is because I suspect that material grievance is, for the most part, but a secondary cause of the demand for a Parliament sitting in Edinburgh; and that its primary cause (as I have already said) is the instinctive urge towards attainment of unity which is stirring in more races than the Scottish.

On the importance of the movement, considered as

¹ See Note C. Scottish Migration to England.

politics, I shall not venture an opinion; so far it has not been strong enough to top the poll at elections, and candidates of the dominant parties do not, I gather, yet regard it as a serious threat to their ascendancy. It may be that this confidence of the dominant parties is misplaced; all movements have to make their beginning and the negligible of to-day may well be the rival of to-morrow. In a world such as that in which we live and are bewildered; where nations and communities are conscious of growing unease and ill-health, arising from causes they can neither define nor control; where diagnosis is various and conflicting, and all that is certain is the presence of disease and danger—in such a world any political party that propounds a remedy in which it has faith, propounds it with energy, with forcefulness and patience, may be fairly certain, as time goes on, of gathering to itself a following.

And in estimating the political future of the movement, we who are English should bear in mind a fact upon which I have insisted elsewhere in these pages: that the Scot has the long historical memory which makes the grievances and enmities of yesterday a factor in the life of to-day. It has struck me as significant and characteristic that in the pages of more than one Nationalist author I have come across extracts from the Declaration of Arbroath—which was drawn up by Scottish barons in the days of Robert the Bruce. The most-quoted passage of the Declaration runs as follows:

‘For so long as one hundred of us remain alive, we will never consent in any way to subject ourselves to the government of the English, since it is not glory, not riches, nor honours, but liberty alone that we contend

for, which no good man will lose but with his life.' . . . To a Scot it seems natural enough to take conscious example by his forebears; but it is only the exceptional Englishman—the very exceptional—who would turn back to the fourteenth century for his inspiration and his text.

If and when the goal of the Nationalist Party—or Parties—is attained; when a Scottish Parliament sits again in Edinburgh and Scotland is provided with a system of government more or less self-sufficing, more or less independent of her southern neighbour, she will still have to deal with her main difficulties, the heritage of her reckless era of industrialism. The half of her population will still cluster on Clydeside and the region round; the derelict glens of the Highlands will still be in need of grants in aid. And she will still have to deal with the problem of her swarming Irish population. But the contention of the Nationalist is that in a Scotland freed from English predominance these and other problems would be dealt with in speedier and more thoroughgoing fashion than is possible under Westminster rule.

To be noted that the movement has a strong literary backing: Neil Gunn, William Power, Compton Mackenzie, Colin Walkinshaw—these are some among the Scottish authors of to-day who favour the breakaway from Westminster. Yet another adherent of the cause is Eric Linklater and it is with a quotation from him that I shall end this chapter.¹ It is chosen as stressing

¹ From *The Lion and the Unicorn*.

that aspect of the movement which, earlier in this chapter, I described as sane and healthy—the attempt to discover a manageable unit of government:

‘The most unfortunate result of Scotland’s association with England has been the immersion of Scotland in a modern brontosaurian state of nearly fifty million inhabitants. . . . A nation needs laws; and who can legislate for fifty million, save by the methods of Procrustes, that first apostle of standardization? A nation needs care; but a nation of fifty million souls is a patchwork of conflicting elements, and who can care for the interests of one save at the expense of others? A nation needs happiness; but positive happiness depends, first and last, on spiritual security, and the spirit is lost and deafened in the noise and complexities and bitter extravagance of the modern state. . . .’

‘If there is any lesson at all to be learnt from the last twenty years, it is surely that bigness has few virtues. The last war was a big war—so big that no one could manage it. . . . The insoluble economic problems of the modern state are largely due to the unmanageable size of the modern state, that is full of contradictory desires and antipathetic interests. . . .’

So Mr. Linklater, sharpening his pen against more than the Act of Union; against the modern worship of size, for itself, and contempt for the day of small things.

VIII. THE GAELIC CULT

OF interest to note that both the mass movements of our post-war world—the national movement and the international—have produced their attempts at planned language. In the case of internationalism, the planned language is an artificial product—Esperanto or the like—put together, with more or less skill, by its inventors, with the object of facilitating verbal intercourse between the various races of mankind. The results of the putting-together may be useful in certain circumstances but they do not appear to be widely popular: language, like the human being whom it serves, is a matter of growth, not of reasoned, machine-made construction.¹

The planning of language for national ends is on other, and contrasting, lines; the aim, in this case, is a speech apart from that of other nations, a treasure of language inherited and peculiar to the race. In a race-conscious Italy the tendency has expressed itself in attempts to purge the language of its alien elements; to oust, for instance, the French word *hotel*, in favour of the native *albergo*. In nations such as Italy, where the speech of the people has developed through the centuries, no more than these minor activities of purification is called

¹ The only 'made' speech that has caught on is the jargon of *Jabberwocky* whereof several expressions have become ordinary English. Its success, I imagine, is due to the fact that it is primitive in character—that is to say, composed of suggestive sound.

for; but there are other regions of the civilized world where the desire to assert nationality through language is not so easily satisfied. There are tongues, once national, which have been superseded by the speech of the alien and are therefore threatened with extinction; if Flemish and Gaelic, for instance, are to maintain their place in the rank of living languages; if they are not to fade into linguistic ghosts, of interest only to the student of times past; then effort, and vigorous effort, is called for on the part of Fleming and of Gael.

Of Flemish procedure in the matter, I know little; but on the part of the Gael, both in Ireland and Scotland, the effort to preserve is not lacking. (Save for inevitable differences of dialect, the language in both countries is the same, but Ireland has preserved an ancient lettering which the Highland Gael has discarded.) The Free State policy with regard to Gaelic is thoroughgoing; the Irish people are to cast away their English, save for use with the foreigner, and relearn the speech of a bygone Erin—the little leaven of native Gaelic speakers leavening the whole English lump. The change is compulsory, the State insisting that the national language shall be used by the teachers in its schools; and in addition to the training of the school child in Irish, there is further compulsion, more or less direct, in the necessity of passing tests in Irish by those who desire to qualify for appointments in the Civil Service or enter the National University. . . . I have met certain Scottish enthusiasts for their ancient tongue who were under the impression that, thanks to its schools and its system of tests, the Free State Government was rapidly converting large sections of its citizens to the use of Irish as their daily

means of expression; but those who do cherish that optimistic belief—and argue from it that a like revival of Gaelic is possible in Scotland—must, if they read them, have been damped by certain recent utterances of that other enthusiast for the ancient tongue, Mr. de Valera himself. At a meeting of the Gaelic League, he dealt with complaints concerning the use—or disuse—of Irish in the Civil Service; he admitted the difficulty of getting people to speak Irish throughout the day but insisted that it was only by the habit of everyday speech, on ordinary matters, that they could hope to call the language back to life. He added that, if any one could produce for the Government 'a scheme to help the revival of Irish, they were prepared to examine it. At the present moment they were studying a scheme which had been presented to them. It would cost a great deal and he was not satisfied that it would do the work they proposed.'¹

I have referred to this speech of Mr. de Valera because it illustrates the difficulty of resuscitating moribund languages; a difficulty which, for obvious reasons, is bound to be even more formidable in Scotland than in Ireland. For in Scotland, unlike Ireland, there is no official eagerness to revive the Gaelic; nor do Gaelic-speaking parents in the Highlands and Islands receive money payments, as they do in the Free State, for keeping up the language in their homes. True, Gaelic is taught in the schools, in those districts where it is spoken, and there are even facilities for its teaching to those who are not native speakers; but the fact remains that it is a language of limited use and scope, so that young people,

¹ *Glasgow Herald*, September 26, 1936.

with their way to make in the world, are likely to put it aside for more gainful branches of learning. To-day it is the language of a very small minority of Scotsmen¹; and only those who live removed from the busy haunts of men can use it to express their daily thoughts. It is the language of the hillside, the loch, the forest, and the field, and was fashioned for the needs, the outlook, and the acts of men who knew little of cities. A Gaelic speaker of my own acquaintance told me that, as regards the features of a countryside, it has niceties of description that are lacking to our blunter English; where, for instance, we, comprehensively and vaguely, say 'hill,' the Gael will have choice of half a dozen terms or more—each of them indicative of some particular attribute of the hill it is sought to describe. But (that same Gaelic speaker went on to say) if the language, in respect of the countryside, is more resourceful than English, there are other respects in which it is far less resourceful; as a tongue chiefly used by the peasant and the fisherman, it wants many of the words and expressions familiar in urbanized speech. It has not, like languages more widely spoken, expanded its vocabulary as new needs came along; to adapt itself to the uses of the modern world—as it would have to do if it revived and spread—it would have to supply itself suddenly and awkwardly with a number of words of foreign origin that have elsewhere been acquired and absorbed by degrees. Such a process would probably result in a patchwork language, a Gaelic defiled; 'for

¹ In the census of 1931, the number of Gaelic speakers in Scotland was given as something over 136,000; a decline of over 22,000 from the numbers of ten years before.

speech,' writes Eric Linklater (in *The Lion and the Unicorn*), 'is something so delicately and almost transparently alive that it cannot be artificially preserved, and it cannot be patched.'

Judging by a Report on its teaching in schools, recently issued by *An Comunn Gaidhealach*,¹ the Gaelic Association, its prospects of survival in any form are not good—survival, that is to say, as a spoken language. The fall in the number of scholars who receive instruction in Gaelic is rapid. The *Scottish Educational Journal*, in which the Report of *An Comunn Gaidhealach* is summarized, states that in 1929 'figures received from the Directors of Education showed that the number receiving instruction in Gaelic was 8,977. To-day (1936) the number is 7,129—a decrease of over twenty per cent. The Report makes the comment that the decrease is "almost incredible" and hints that possibly the 1929 figures were over-estimated. All deduction made, the result is staggering.'

And these scholastic figures are the more discouraging to Gaelic enthusiasts when it is realized that of the 7,129 young Highlanders who receive instruction in the tongue of their ancestors, only 1,386 come from homes on the mainland of Scotland; the majority have their dwelling in the Western Isles—those last strongholds of Gaeldom. And apparently the native-speaking Gael himself is not always desirous of preserving his linguistic

¹ *An Comunn Gaidhealach* was founded in 1891 with the object of encouraging:

The teaching and use of the Gaelic language.

The study and cultivation of Gaelic literature, history, music, and art.

The native industries of the Highlands of Scotland and the wearing of the Highland dress.

heritage. Frequent reference is made throughout the Report to the apathy, and even the hostility, of Gaelic-speaking parents. Thus from a school on the west coast of Inverness comes the statement:

'The majority of Gaelic-speaking parents are averse to the speaking of Gaelic to their children; they discourage the use of it so that their children have very imperfect English and no Gaelic.' While from another teacher comes similar discouragement: 'Parents object to Gaelic as a waste of time.'

Regrettable as is this parental attitude—and irritating as it must be to those who are striving to keep life in the dying Gaelic—it is comprehensible enough. The elder generation may have been handicapped by its lack of command of the tongue more generally spoken; it knows, moreover, that if its children are to go out in the world and rise there, their Gaelic will be of small use to them. So why waste the years of their education in acquiring a valueless knowledge?

The parental point of view is comprehensible and rational enough; yet it is hard not to sympathize with the other, and contrary, point of view—of language as an aid to racial tradition and barrier against absorption by a race more numerous. 'If it dies,' writes a Highlander of to-day, Dr. Lachlan Grant, 'there is very little left to distinguish us from any of the other English-speaking peoples. In every land struggling for freedom, the preservation of their language is always considered a matter of sublime importance. If then the Gaelic tradition dies and Scotland remains completely under London, then, truly, will the Scot become a northern Englishman.'

It is to be feared, however, that not many Highlanders attach the same importance as does Dr. Grant to the keeping alive of Gaelic speech; the majority even of the racially conscious are probably in agreement with Mr. Evan M. Barron when he insists that it is not the all-important thing in Highland life. 'Gaelic,' he writes, 'was but the language of one, and that a comparatively late comer, of the racial groups whose blood flows in the veins of the Highlander of to-day. Following the Celtic conquest of Scotland, Gaelic was for a time, but only for a time, the language of most of Scotland, but just as it had secured its ascendancy owing to circumstances which prevailed at a definite period, so, as other circumstances came into operation, it gave way as its predecessors had done, until at last it was confined to the more inaccessible parts of the country . . . and to-day it is fighting what I fear is a losing battle. But from a strictly historical point of view, Gaelic has no more claim to be regarded as an inalienable *racial* heritage of the Highlands, which must be preserved at all costs, than have any of the languages which preceded or succeeded it. In fact, it is the language of many Highlanders to-day merely because their ancestors were conquered by Gaelic speakers in bygone centuries. I have heard it laid down that Lewis is the heart of Gaeldom for the sole reason that Gaelic survives as a spoken tongue there to a greater extent than in any other part of the Highlands. Yet there is little of the blood of the Gael in Lewis, whose people are mainly of Iberian and Norse descent.'¹

¹ See Note D. Languages of Scotland.

But if Highland Gaelic, as a means of living intercourse, is doomed—and spite of the efforts of *An Comunn Gaidhealach* one fears that so it is—the Highland Gaels who have forgotten how to speak it are hardly likely to cast away the rest of their racial heritage. Like their fellow-Celts in Ireland and in Wales they have established a cult of their national arts and the Welsh Eisteddfod has its counterpart in the yearly Mod. The Mod, to judge by its Inverness example of 1936, is an institution very much alive; it stands for the encouragement of the Gaelic spirit as expressed in every form of Gaelic art. Prizes are given for proficiency in the language; for poems and essays and stories and, in the case of the younger generation, for ability to converse and write from dictation in Gaelic; and—of more interest, this, to the Sassenach visitor—for excellence in Gaelic music. The competitors come from all over Scotland and sometimes from beyond; there is a London Gaelic choir that always, I was told, gets an extra warm welcome when it steps on the platform, in acknowledgment of the length of its journey. I sat, one afternoon, through two choir competitions—one of mixed men and women, one of women's voices only—and the standard in both cases seemed to me extraordinarily high. The mixed competition was carried off by a choir from Argyllshire with a genius of a blind conductor who made of his singers one perfect and delightful instrument; and though I heard the same melodies again and again, they were so lovely that I was sorry when the contest was over.

If he judged only by the number and size of the choirs that compete at these annual Mods, the casual visitor might well conclude that Gaelic was a widely-

spoken language in many of the counties of Scotland. As a matter of fact, however, the member of a Gaelic choir is not always a Gaelic speaker; I was told by one in a position to know that a choir of over thirty which recently took a high place in the Mod competitions contained only one member who knew sufficient Gaelic to string a whole sentence together—the rest had merely been instructed in the necessary sounds.¹ Since, given a competent teacher, there is no difficulty about singing in a language unknown, it may be the Mod is not doing very much towards keeping spoken Gaelic alive; but in displaying the treasure of Gaelic music—in fostering a love and understanding thereof—it is doing a work which, in these days of the crooner, deserves thanks from more than the Gael.

As a matter of course, a Mod is more than its competitions, it is a festival, winding up with full-dress concert and dance, and so long as it lasts the tartan makes pleasant variety in the streets—worn both by women and by men. It is, I suppose, as a result of reviving race-consciousness and the efforts of *An Comunn Gaidhealach*

¹ Against this it is only fair to note that, on the authority of Mr. William Power, 'in the district around and between Oban and Fort William there has been a spontaneous movement to revive Gaelic culture. Here and there one comes upon a little school where a young woman teacher—dark and Celtiberian mostly, and of crofter parentage—is doing her best, without any official encouragement, to keep alive the language and the spirit of her race. These are the true heroines of Gaeldom, against whom the MacGradgrinds shall not prevail.' Since I, like Mr. Power, am saddened by the thought of humanity cut to one pattern and speaking with one voice, I wish all success to the heroines of Gaeldom; but I fear, I very much fear, they are up against more than the MacGradgrinds!

that the kilt is more frequently worn than it was in the Scotland of my youth; on my first visit to Inverness, some forty years ago, the only kilts to be seen about the town were those of the local battalion of Cameron Highlanders; this year, even when the Mod was not in progress, the kilt was a customary sight. Also its wearing is more widely distributed; it is not confined, as once it was, to the country-gentleman class and its attendant ghillies.

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Lecturing at Oxford shortly after the War, Sir Arthur Keith said that 'only those who have come into direct contact with racial antagonisms know how deeply they are situated in the primitive organization of the human brain.' That is a statement that our world-experience of the last few years has justified and more than justified; but it is also a statement that requires some amplification. For antagonism is only one of the elements whereof our racial feeling is compounded; there is also racial pride and love.

As already said, one of the phenomena of post-war Europe has been a stirring of the racial spirit; a stirring unlooked for by those whose ideal was a world-state—unlooked for and likewise unwelcome. And wherever it has stirred, its aims and activities have been fundamentally similar. There is always an insistence on the race as a community apart; with characteristics due to its descent, and therefore unshared by those who are not of the racial blood. That being so, it is not surprising that purity in the strain should be esteemed and often assumed; descent is traced from some old, admired

ancestry and the intermingling of alien blood is, as far as possible, ignored. In Germany, where the racial spirit has reacted fiercely against internationalism, there are regions in which, as a matter of history, it would often be difficult to differentiate between the strain of Teuton and of Slav. In a new Italy, seeking to revive an imperial tradition, the Italian people prides itself on the blood of the dominating Roman; in convenient forgetfulness of such historical facts as the barbarian invader, the multitudinous slave and the Greek who gave his name to Magna Graecia. Go to Ireland, where also is a mingling of divers races: where there has been an Ulster Plantation and wave after wave of English settlement; where there also has been Spanish trade and Norse occupation; and you will meet with Irishmen—with frequent Irishmen—who talk and think as if their ancestry were Celtic throughout!

There are reasons, and obvious reasons, why belief in racial purity cannot be so strong in Scotland as it is elsewhere but, all the same, it exists and to a certain extent is a factor in the Nationalist movement and its interlinked Gaelic revival. Scottish history, in some quarters, is being re-written on racial lines; in accordance with a theory which represents Scotland—Scotland as a whole and not only the Highlands—as predominantly, almost purely, Celtic. 'It is claimed nowadays,' writes Edwin Muir in his *Scottish Journey*, 'that long before [Flodden] and for some time after this period there existed a highly-developed Celtic civilization, both in the Highlands and the Lowlands. I do not know whether this was actually the case; the historical evidence for it seems somewhat inadequate; but if it was

the case, then that civilization was evidently without the power to coalesce into a unity. . . . Almost all Scotland was Celtic at the time of the Stewarts, we are told, and Gaelic was spoken in the Lowlands two hundred years ago.' . . . Like Mr. Muir, I do not know whether this was actually the case—there seem to be varying opinions on the subject and decision must be left to the expert; but what concerns me here is not the verity, or otherwise, of this particular reading of Scottish history but the 'racialist' frame of mind that desires to accept it as veracious. Those who do accept it will explain to you that the alien inroads and conquests of the past, whatever they may have signified in a military sense, had effects that were all but negligible as regards the bulk of the race. The modern historian (so I was assured) believes that it was a very small foreign element that established itself permanently in Scotland of the Gaels; in Caithness, for instance, where place-names in a great part of the county still bear witness to Norse rule and conquest, that rule and conquest did not mean settlement on a large scale and consequent expulsion of the native Celtic population. It was only the lordship of the county that had been transferred to a few Norse chiefs and rulers; the bulk of its inhabitants—the tillers of the soil and the fishers of the sea—did not change because their masters changed. That, at least, is the theory favoured by what may be called Racial-Nationalism; and which applies, I understand, to penetration in the south, by the Saxon, as well as by the Viking in the north.

In an earlier chapter I have written at some length of the Irish problem of industrial Scotland, and of the



Andrew Pulleson, Inverness

CULLEDEN MOOR.

none-too-friendly sentiments that are sometimes entertained by the native Scot towards the formidable Irish colony that has dug itself in on the Clyde. That sentiment, however, is not always shared by the race-conscious Scot; on the contrary, his feeling toward the Irish Celt may be one of friendly kinship, not antagonism. The long Celtic memory goes back to the day when there was no national division between those of the race who dwelt in Ireland and their brethren of western Scotland and the Isles; when the O'Donnells of Ulster were kin to the Macdonnells of Argyll. I do not suggest that this consciousness of Celtic unity is widespread but I have come across it more than once—come across it both in writing and in speech. There is, as I have already pointed out, a strong similarity between racial movements, wherever they are manifest, and this turning of the race-conscious Highlander to his Irish brethren is the same in kind—though happily not in degree—as the urge of the race-conscious German towards union with the *Auslandsdeutschen*. And doubtless it has received a stimulus from the Nationalist movement.¹

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There can be no better choice for a Gaelic gathering than Inverness; which is not only the capital of the Highlands but has almost at its gate the Culloden battle-ground where ended more than the hope of a Stewart restoration; a Highland tradition and way of life whose spirit, as expressed in its arts and speech, the Mod of to-day is endeavouring to preserve alive.²

¹ See Note E. Scots and Irish.

² See Note F. Heritable Jurisdiction.

The Scot has a habit, unshared by the Englishman, of dwelling on his past misfortunes of defeat; he can still be stirred by the disaster of Flodden, and it is, I think, in one of the works of Andrew Lang that I once read the story of an old Scottish gentleman, who, in the fourth century after Flodden was fought, stood on the battlefield and spoke of it with tears in his eyes. Did any contemporary Englishman, I wonder, ever stand and weep upon the field of Bannockburn where the chivalry of England was laid low? . . . It is true the defeat of Bannockburn had little effect upon English life in general; though it gave his freedom to the Scot it did not take freedom from the Englishman; it was a blow to England's pride rather than to England's prosperity. Flodden, on the other hand, to Scotland meant sheer disaster; the end of an epoch of comparative stability, the death of a ruler strong enough to rule, the succession of a child and dissensions of a long minority. But even if Bannockburn had been as bitterly important to England as Flodden to Scotland, few Englishmen, at this time of day, would be found to sorrow at its memory. For we, as a race, are not made that way; be it for good, or be it for ill, we are oddly forgetful of our past.

If the Field of Flodden is still real to the Scot, even more real is that other tragic field of Culloden. Where 'on the 15th of April 1746 the Duke of Cumberland with an army of 9,000 men, including a large force of foreign troops, met Charles . . . and this time numbers, position, weather, and equipment fought together against the rebels. The leaders were squabbling among themselves; the rank and file were famishing and exhausted by a long night march; the Macdonalds were

piqued by being refused their traditional post on the right wing; Cumberland's artillery worked its will upon the Highlanders who were drawn up in an insanely exposed position; a storm of wind and sleet drove into their faces. . . .¹ And so, the end of a political adventure, the end of an epoch in Highland history—and the long mounds on Drummossie Moor that betoken the graves of clans.²

'This,' said the Provost of Inverness, speaking in April 1936 beside the memorial cairn on the moor, 'this is the hundred and ninetieth anniversary of the Battle of Culloden, and yet the very name of the field when mentioned thrills the hearts of thousands of Scotsmen and even Englishmen at home and abroad.'³ . . . We are not here to-day to discuss the rights or the wrongs of the events which culminated in the battle fought on this field. We are here to remember the valour and

¹ George Malcolm Thomson, *Short History of Scotland*.

² See Note G. The Jacobite Clans.

³ Compare Boswell, writing some thirty years after Culloden. 'M'Queen walked some miles to give us a convoy. He had, in 1745, joined the Highland army at Fort Augustus, and continued in it till after the Battle of Culloden. As he narrated the particulars of that ill-advised but brave attempt, I could not refrain from tears. There is a certain association of ideas in my mind upon that subject, by which I am strongly affected. The very Highland names, or the sound of a bagpipe, will stir my blood and fill me with a mixture of melancholy and respect for courage; with pity for an unfortunate and superstitious regard for antiquity, and thoughtless inclination for war; in short, with a crowd of sensations with which sober rationality has nothing to do.' . . . There are certain historical memories which have power, through centuries, to arouse emotions 'with which sober rationality has nothing to do'; and among those memories is the tragedy of the Forty-Five.

chivalry of those who fought for what they believed to be a just cause, and who by that same chivalry left us an undying inheritance of romance which is perhaps not equalled in the history of any other country.'

That undying inheritance of romance is the Highlander's one compensation for the misery brought upon his country by Stewart adventure. A poor compensation when one thinks of Culloden's aftermath—but a real one, nevertheless! Mr. Evan Barron, that sanest of Highlanders, may be right in denouncing the Jacobite cult as 'that creature of ignorance, misrepresentation, and narrowmindedness . . . dishonouring and injurious to the Highlands'; but however mistaken the cult may be, there is this to be said for it; it is a manifestation, in part at least, of one of the finer and sweeter instincts of humanity. The mysterious instinct which constrains our love and interest to the unfortunate rather than the fortunate; which bids us love and idealize the failure in life rather than him who succeeds. It is the failures of the world who live on after death as more than dull pages of history—as legends not willingly forgotten by those who come after. If there had been no Moscow and no Waterloo, and Napoleon had founded his Bonaparte dynasty, there would have been Napoleonic history but hardly Napoleonic legend; that came of St. Helena, where the eagle beat against his bars! And if Charles Edward Stewart had been crowned at Westminster and reigned, fat and prosperous, as Charles III, he would have mattered no more to the singer of ballads than many another who has reigned and been gathered to his fathers. And (a minor matter but also a significant) I should hardly have been shown by a Highland school-

master the leathern powder-horn his ancestor carried at Culloden—been shown it as his chiefest of treasures. Charlie is sung and remembered with tenderness because he was luckless and a failure!

Inverness, and not Inverness only, has been stirred of late by what is considered a desecration of the battlefield, the erection nearby, for convenience of tourists, of a teashop and petrol pumps; the speech of the Provost from which I have quoted was in the nature of a protest at the innovation. The offending teashop adjoins what is known as the Field of the English—the burial-place of Cumberland's fallen; as regards appearance, I have, I regret to say, seen many worse teashops scattered round the country. The objection to it, however, is chiefly on principle, as commercialization of a site held sacred by the Highlander; and the immediate result of the commercializing threat has been a demand that the National Trust shall take over the battlefield for the nation. . . . The last ending of the Great Man is his appearance as a few dreary lines in a schoolbook; and the last ending of a scene of human tragedy is as place of call for the motor-bus, and receptacle of motor-bus litter! It is, one must conclude, because it was the scene of another Scottish tragedy that a well-meaning department has developed Glencoe by driving a nice wide road through it. The road does not serve any agricultural or industrial district but it is admirably engineered and fulfils to perfection the usual purpose for which the tourist highway is constructed—that is to say, for carrying as many people as possible, as fast as possible, past objects of interest in the landscape! The old track, no doubt, was a pathetic failure from the point of view of the

motorist; but with every winding turn the glen showed different, at every elbow you looked back as well as forward—whereas now, on that excellently graded road, you always face one way. . . . The tourist industry is of very real value to the Highlands but, like everything of value, it has its price—which sometimes, alas! is paid in vulgarization.

IX. THE KIRK

IN my younger days, when I toured in Scotland, I toured in the theatrical sense, as member of a company of players; and it was an understood thing that when we crossed the Border there would be a change in the normal routine of our week. In England, as a matter of course, we did our travelling on Sundays; by so doing the baggage and scenery could be in the theatre on Monday morning and the stage manager have plenty of time to set his scenes and, when necessary, rehearse the band and local supers. Travelling on Monday, if the 'sets' were heavy and the journey any length, meant a rush for the stage manager and his subordinates—and sometimes, if they had lodgings to find, for other members of the company; but travelling on Monday was an inconvenience that had to be put up with in Scotland, for the reason that trains did not run. The Sabbath of the 'nineties was still very much the Sabbath; and I think I am right in saying that the only train communication permitted on the day of rest was by the Glasgow-Edinburgh-London mails.

It was somewhere in the 'twenties that I realized, with a shock, the change that had come over the country in the matter of Sabbath observance; for on a station in Edinburgh—where I had not been for a good many years—I found myself staring at a poster I could hardly believe in! A poster which set forth, in large and shameless lettering, the price of a Sunday excursion to

the Scott country—Melrose and Dryburgh and Abbotsford. As I say, I could hardly believe it—thinking on the Scotland of my youth! I remembered how once, on a Scottish Sabbath, the girl who shared lodgings with me sat down to play on the cracked piano in our sitting-room—and before she had got through half a dozen bars, the door was thrown open and there entered grimly our landlady. On behalf of her husband, as well as herself, she told us what she thought of our Sabbath-breaking and forbade another note on the piano; if that was the way we behaved ourselves, we shouldn't have taken up our lodging in her respectable house! We ought to have been studying our Bibles instead of playing godless tunes—and a good deal more to that effect! What that grim lady would have thought of Sunday excursions to the Scott country! . . .

Not that her spirit and practice is wholly extinct. There was widespread and horrified protest a year or two ago at the starting of a Sunday motor-bus service in the northern Highlands; local disapproval even went to the length of appointing a day of humiliation and prayer when the Sabbath-breaking bus began its rounds. And there was the case (which attracted amused attention in the English Press) of the civic dignitary cast out by his Church because, in the course of holiday festivities, he allowed some young people to dance in his house. That case, however, must not be taken as typical; the exercise and amusement of dancing is by no means abhorrent to the average Scot—as witness the cult of the reel! The 'unco guid' who were shocked by their provost's permission of frivolity were not members of the Church of Scotland but of a dissenting body whose following, in

that particular neighbourhood, could not have been large—judging by the size of its chapel which was pointed out to me when I was staying in the district. It was because the attitude of the ‘unco guid’ was sufficiently unusual to create a local sensation that it eventually attained to wider publicity in the Press. . . . The car has everywhere been a potent factor in the changing of Sunday custom; and the change was hastened by the War and the new ways of thought that were its consequence. Contact with the Irish Catholic colony may also have been an influence in favour of week-end relaxation, since there is little of the grimness of Calvinism in the Catholic tradition of Sunday. And though Scotland is still outwardly a God-fearing country there as in many other parts of the world the cry goes up that the Church is losing its hold.

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From the Reformation in England there evolved, in the first place, the Anglican Church; which, after the manner of good English achievement in every walk of life, was a compromise—to be justified not by theory and logic but by rule of thumb and experience. The Scot, as has been said, is less of Teuton and more of Celt than the Englishman, and by that fact, less inclined to compromise and, when roused, more impetuous in action, more given to extremes. His Reformation, therefore, was of thoroughgoing type; he reacted against the abuses of Catholicism with iconoclastic vehemence. In the violence of his reaction he rejected not only the stained windows and images of the older faith but its methods of Church government and all the outward

forms of its liturgy. The faith he learned from Calvin was a faith unadorned, whose spirit had no need to be clothed in outward beauty; he praised his God—devoutly praised Him—in that doggerel defacement of inspired psalmody which is known as the metrical version. (When one thinks of the lovely English of the unrhymed version, the aesthetic sin of those who doggerelized the psalms is a sin very hard to forgive!)

Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks: so longeth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

So runs the version of the forty-second psalm which is used in the Anglican prayer-book. It is rhythmical and phrased with the beauty of simplicity; qualities which cannot have appealed to Scottish piety since it set its own rhymesters to work—with the following result:

Like as the hart for water-brooks
 In thirst doth pant and bray;
 So pants my longing soul, O God,
 That come to thee I may.
 My soul for God, the living God,
 Doth thirst: when shall I near
 Unto thy countenance approach,
 And in God's sight appear?

'In thirst doth pant and bray'—what a line! And equally saddening from the aesthetic point of view is the familiar psalm fifty-five:

Lord, hear my prayer, hide not thyself
 From my entreating voice;
 Attend and hear me; in my plaint
 I mourn and make a noise.

Because of th'en'my's voice and for
Lewd men's oppression great;
On me they cast iniquity
And they in wrath me hate.

Sore pained within me is my heart:
Death's terrors on me fall,
On me comes trembling, fear, and dread
O'erwhelmed me withal.
O that I, like a dove, had wings,
Said I, then would I flee
Far hence, that I might find a place
Where I in rest might be.

Strange that a people whose heritage of ballad bears witness to their sense alike of rhythm and the word should have preferred this jogtrot to the psalm as their neighbours sang it:

Hear my prayer, O God: and hide not thyself from my petition.

Take heed unto me, and hear me: how I mourn in my prayer, and am vexed.

The enemy crieth so, and the ungodly cometh on so fast: for they are minded to do me some mischief; so maliciously are they set against me.

My heart is disquieted within me: and the fear of death is fallen upon me.

Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me; and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.

And I said, O that I had wings like a dove: for then would I flee away, and be at rest.

I am not suggesting for a moment that doggerel has no share in the worship of the Anglican Church; the hymnals

in use afford plenty of proof to the contrary. But in the instance of the psalms, the Anglican Church, having poetry to hand, made use of it; while the Scottish Kirk rejected the poetry in favour of machine-made rhyme. A rejection explained (one supposes) by the hard contempt for beauty of ornament wherein the Geneva of Calvin instructed the Scotland of Knox; a contempt which had its effects on the national life in other spheres than the religious. . . . Looking back on history, there emerge from it few men who attained Knox's power of moulding life and thought to his chosen pattern—and moulding it so firmly that through centuries the pattern endured. His influence on Scotland of the sixteenth century has been compared with the influence of Lenin on Russia—and who shall say whether the Lenin ideology will have the tough permanence of Knoxian teaching and morality? He converted Scotland not to the compromising Protestantism of England; not to the Lutheranism of Germany which still, in its forms of worship, retained traces of its Catholic origins; but to the uncompromising theology he had learned in the school of John Calvin. A logical theology, it appealed to a logical people; hence it became 'the greatest single influence for good and ill that operated on the mind of this people, that caught them and wrought them at the supremely malleable moment of their history, and left an impression on them which three centuries have not been able to erase. . . . It is therefore one of the main factors which have brought about that profound and elusive differentiation between the Scottish people and their neighbours of the same island. . . .'¹ Not a lovable prophet, John

¹ Thomson's *Short History of Scotland*.

Knox, but a driving force; and the same to a certain extent may be said of the religion he left to his country, in the days when its dominion was strongest. But the Church institutions that to others seem austere, to the devout of Calvinism were a means of grace and redemption. 'As to the spirit of worship which this austere institutional framework can support and express, we can best discover its quality in the unflinching obedience to costly moral standards which in its golden age it demanded and obtained, in the heroism of those who suffered for it, and in the temper of those early Scottish prayer-books. . . . The prayers which these books provide, so serious and moderate in their demand upon God, so uncompromising in their implied ethical standard, so constant in their remembrance of that only consummation of worship in which "all thingis quhilk brethis with lyfe may praise thee, as the true lyfe of all creatures" are those which nourished the life of the old Scottish Church.'¹ . . . As to the enduring effects of the Reformation on Scottish faith and practice, they may be characterized as 'a great love of Biblical religion, and thoroughgoing conviction of the intimate connection between faith and works, and of the dedication of the moral life as the ultimate act of worship. . . . These qualities are capable of unlovely and humourless exaggeration; but at their best they represent . . . that emphasis on the moral will, without which the Christian complex lacks the noble element of costliness.'²

The strength of the religious tradition established by

¹ Evelyn Underhill, *Worship*.

² *Ibid.*

Knox, and its permanent effect upon the character of the nation, are due in great part to the Presbyterian system of religious education and Church government. Not a hierarchy but the people of the Church were the source of governing power; hence the insistence of Knox and his followers on a high standard of religious education for the general body of Church members. Duties which elsewhere devolve on a priesthood were in Scotland discharged by the lay—duties both of worship and instruction; the God-fearing peasant in *The Cottar's Saturday Night* is a man well instructed in the faith of his Church as well as in the lore of his Bible.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face
They round the ingle form a circle wide;
The sire turns o'er wi' patriarchal grace
The big ha' Bible, aince his father's pride:
His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
His lyart haffets wearing thin and bare:
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide,
He wales a portion with judicious care,
And 'Let us worship God,' he says with solemn air.

The picture here drawn is said to have been suggested by Burns's memories of his own up-bringing; if so it is proof—if proof were needed!—that the twig does not always stay as it is bent. But if the system, like every other, created its reaction, and the perfervid Scottish temperament has been known to revolt against it with vehemence; yet the fact remains that it 'left an impress on (the Scottish people) which three centuries have not been able to erase.' Religious unity was no more possible in Scotland than elsewhere and at various times, and

from various causes, there appeared divisions and arose new sects; Cameronians, Burghers, Anti-Burghers, and the like—and, exceeding them all in importance, the Disruption of 1843, which rent the Church of Scotland in twain. But whatever the differences between the various sects, they have always, when the flame of their faith burned clear, been able to demand the 'unflinching obedience to costly moral standards' that expresses itself in sacrifice and sometimes, also, in rebellion; Knox's teaching, that subjects had the right to resist tyrannical rulers was not forgotten by his Church. Those who suffered for adherence to the Covenant were numbered by thousands; and when, after the Restoration, episcopacy was by law re-established in Scotland, 400 ministers gave up their livings rather than acknowledge its supremacy. Nearly two centuries later, in 1843, 400 other ministers, like-minded with Chalmers, protested against the infringement by patronage of the Church's right to select her own ministers and announced their intention of forming themselves into the Church of Scotland, Free.¹ A protest, signed by many of them, was read to the Assembly by Dr. Welsh, a professor in Edinburgh University; having read it, he bowed to the Lord High Commissioner and led the way to the door. He was followed by Dr. Chalmers, the real leader of the movement, and the 400 ministers in agreement; and, passing through the multitude gathered outside, they marched to a hall where they held the first Free Church Assembly. As to whether the dispute was needful or secession was in the best interests of the Church, that is a matter for the ecclesiastical historian

¹ See Note H. The Patronage Act.

but the sacrifices they were called on to make were proof enough of their sincerity. The day when Covenanters were hunted on the hills was long over; but there are other methods beside charges by dragoons of making things unhappy for dissenters. The number of ministers who gave up their livings on the day of Disruption was 480; the combined amount that they lost in stipend amounting to something like £100,000 a year. 'The parish schoolmasters also who joined the Free Church had to leave their situations. Hundreds of farmers were put out of their farms and many could not get new farms till they went to New Zealand to find a home, and to found the colony of Dunedin, in the South Island, still very strongly Presbyterian. Many proprietors and factors tried to check the Free Church by refusing sites for new churches. At Canonbie, in Dumfriesshire, the people had to worship all winter at the roadside, often seated in the snow. At Penpont an old woman had a cottage and a garden of her own, and she gave her garden for a site when no other could be got. Some congregations had to worship on the seashore below high water mark, where the landowner could not prevent them, and in Loch Sunart, Mull, an old hulk was moored and the people came by hundreds in boats to worship.'¹ . . . I myself have been shown, on the north-west coast, a pit-like amphitheatre, set in the cliff, where a congregation who had followed their minister where his conscience led used to gather and sit round on a Sunday. But the movement was too widespread and genuine to suffer these hardships of accommodation for long; its

¹ John D. Rose, *Scotland's True Glory*. The story of the Church of Scotland.

followers were numerous, some of them well-to-do, many of them eager to help; and it is said that within a year of the Disruption 500 new churches had been built.

The severance between the two Churches lasted eighty-six years; it was in 1929 that, after long negotiation, the desired reunion was achieved — only a small minority of the United Free Church standing out, on the ground that the Church of Scotland was established, and therefore under the State control to which they objected on principle. The reunion was marked by a day of solemn ceremony. 'The two Assemblies marched two deep from their halls, the Church of Scotland moving down the High Street and the United Free coming up the Mound, to meet at the top of Bank Street, where the ranks shook hands and united to go four deep into St. Giles Cathedral . . . the crowds lining Bank Street and the High Street, when the processions appeared, broke here and there into the great Scottish Psalms 'The Lord's my Shepherd' and "Behold how good a thing it is."¹ . . .' By 1929 the original cause of separation had long ceased to exist; Disraeli had abolished patronage in Scotland in the year 1874. Many quarrels continue long after the contestants have forgotten what started them fighting; hence there is nothing surprising in the fact that, after the abolition of patronage, half a century went by before the two Churches agreed to compose their differences.

There are those who will tell you that the coming together was not altogether a benefit to the country in its religious life, and that the Free and Established

¹ *Ibid.*

Churches did better apart. 'If,' I was told, in one parish where I stayed, 'you meet any one who grumbles about the union, he won't mean the union with England but the union of the Churches; it isn't at all popular here.' Whether such an attitude is frequent I have no means of knowing but it is not surprising that it should exist, since the tradition of Dissent is not that of Establishment and the union is only of yesterday. In any sphere of life it takes time to get used to double harness.¹

The Church of Scotland is far less unfriendly than it was of old to the ornament and ritual of worship; the Calvinist reaction against all that was Romanist has had four centuries to wear itself out and, in some quarters at least, the service is becoming more liturgical and therefore less dependent on the minister's preaching and his long individual prayers. In the old days festivals of the Church were ignored; since Easter and Whitsuntide were made much of by Rome and the Episcopal Church, Calvinism granted them no special honour and the Scottish winter rejoicing centred on the New Year rather than the Christmas festival. In modern service-books, however, the ordinary commemorations of the Christian year find their place in the liturgy—even to the extent of proper prayers for the seasons of Advent, Lent, and Holy Week.²

¹ See Note I. The Wee Frees.

² It is interesting (if saddening) to note the extent to which the forms of worship of religious bodies are influenced by their antagonisms. As has been said, the outward harshness of the Scottish

When one reads in the pages of Scottish history how often Church and State have been at clash with one another, there is something paradoxical in the emphasis laid on the Church and State connection when the Assembly of the Church of Scotland meets in Edinburgh. The Church of England, whose relations with the State have, on the whole, been more amicable, is the recipient of no such ceremonial honours, when it holds its Congress, as those which are annually paid to the sister Establishment. For the Lord High Commissioner, who proceeds in state to open the Assembly, is, for the time being, the sovereign's representative in Scotland; installed in the royal palace of Holyrood and escorted by the military when he drives to his public engagements. . . . There is nothing in English ecclesiastical life corresponding to the service in St. Giles, where the sermon is preached by the retiring Moderator and which is attended not only by the Lord High Commissioner and his temporary court, but by civic dignitaries from all over the country—provosts in their robes of office walking in procession up the aisle. To get into the cathedral for that ceremonious service the unprivileged (such as myself) have to take their places in a queue and

Presbyterian rite was motived largely by dislike of the Church of Rome; and two other examples of the same tendency are afforded by the Episcopal Church as it exists in Ireland and in Scotland. In Ireland, in contrast to the dominant faith, its services have little of the Catholic element; in Scotland, where the dominant faith is Presbyterian—and where, in times past, the Episcopalians have suffered persecution as well as inflicted it—the tendency is all to eucharistic ceremony and what, farther south, would be known as Anglo-Catholicism.

take them betimes, for it is a queue a box-office might envy. Thanks to the kind offices of a neighbour in the throng, who was a regular frequenter of Assembly meetings and services, I had the best of luck in the matter of a seat; when our waiting was over and the doors were opened, I was shepherded with speed into an excellent pew in the centre aisle—along which passed all the processions. (To be noted that the cathedral of St. Giles does not, like our English cathedrals, dispense with the services of women in its choir.) In the packed body of the church there sat contingents of ministers and their wives and the elders attending the Assembly; for those who spend the rest of the year in one of the lonelier parishes of Scotland, the ten days of the annual gathering in Edinburgh must be of importance, apart from the business of the Church there transacted. It is their one occasion for contact with their fellows and the life of a capital city—with its sights, its intercourse, and movement. The teashops of Princes Street, of an afternoon, are sprinkled with the black coats of ministers; and the shop-windows of tailoring establishments break out into models of clerical attire, from a moderator's robes downwards. Many rural ministers no doubt will find it advisable to make their yearly purchases of clothing during the visit to Edinburgh. Such of the younger ministers as I saw about seemed to me of a good type—and I looked at the younger men with most interest, since with them is the future of the Church. All the same, one is told, in Scotland as elsewhere, that it is not so easy as it was of yore to obtain the right recruits for the ministry; the Church does not call as it did to the best of the younger generation.

But even if that is the case, and even though what used to be Sabbath-breaking is now condoned, still, Scotland, as compared to England, strikes one as a God-fearing country. Despite the now permitted competition of the Sunday excursion, churches, on the whole, appear to be well filled; while, in rural and small-town districts at any rate, the life of the community seems to centre round the church to a greater extent than in England.

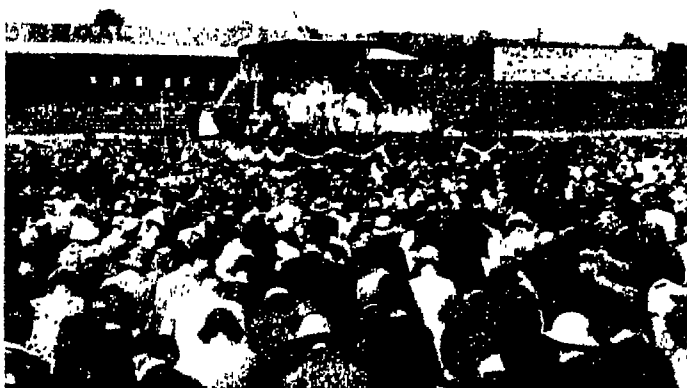
X. SCOTLAND OF THE CATHOLIC

By the average Englishman it is still assumed that religious Scotland is a country wholly and rigidly Protestant, according to the tradition of Knox; it will probably come as a surprise to him, therefore, to learn that Scotland is divided by the Roman Catholic Church into four bishoprics and two archbishoprics and that it contained, in the year 1930, 450 Roman Catholic places of worship—a number that, by now, may have increased. The assumption of a Scotland completely Protestant has never been correct; although after the Reformation it became predominantly Protestant, there were parts of the country that the Reformation never influenced. These, understandably enough, were districts north of the Highland line, whose inhabitants, living apart in their glens, had little to do with the outside world and so remained unaffected by the general religious upheaval. There is a section of Scotland, crossing the Highlands and including some of the Hebrides, where the people have always adhered to the older faith.

The majority of Scotland's Roman Catholics, however, have imported their faith with them from Ireland and are settled not in Highland glens, but in Glasgow and the region round; in Dumbartonshire they are said to number about half the population, while at one municipal institution in the county I was told by the superinten-



A MAY QUEEN AT CAREN GROTTO



Catholic Herald

HIGH MASS AT A DUNTERMLINE FOOTBALL GROUND

dent that seventy-five per cent of the beneficiaries were Catholics. The size and frequency of the Catholic elementary school in itself bears witness to departure from Knoxian tradition and if any English visitor to Glasgow wishes to see for himself how strongly the faith of the older Church has established itself in industrial Scotland, he cannot do better than take one of the buses that runs out to Motherwell and alight at the grotto, or pilgrimage place, of Carfin.

A grotto, in the ecclesiastical sense, is not, as I used to think, a cave—perhaps, like ‘sanctions,’ the meaning of the word has recently been changed; this particular grotto, at any rate, is a garden, a sacred garden, with railed-off spaces, set with shrubs and little pools, and statues of saints, all rather new-looking and suggestive of a public pleasure-ground; but judging by the demeanour of those who frequented it, its obvious modernity was no deterrent of devotion. . . . Interesting to note that there is a fashion in saints—some are popular, some are neglected. I say this with no irreverent intention; on the contrary, it seems to me natural enough that, at certain epochs, certain saintly figures should exercise particular attraction. Something there may be in novelty, since to-day the most popular saint in the Catholic world is, to all appearance, the recently canonized St. Therèse of Lisieux; after her comes St. Francis of Assisi, and then, I should say, St. Anthony of Padua—whose special veneration may be due to the fact that his quincentenary was celebrated a few years ago. All these and many others had their shrines at the grotto of Carfin. ‘The Scottish Lourdes’ it is also called, at present in inverted commas; but it may be

that faith, before many years are past, will produce a sufficiency of miracles to justify removal of the commas.¹ Its foundation is only of yesterday; to be exact, it dates from the year 1920; and the force that brought it into being was the enthusiasm of a local priest.

Its subsequent history is set forth, as follows, on a tablet erected near the entry of the grotto.

'Our Blessed Lady's volunteers began this Grotto in September 1920. On Rosary Sunday 1922 it was dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, and to St. Thérèse, "The Little Flower," called by Pope Pius XI "the Darling of the Whole World." The great number of pilgrims in 1923 made it necessary to extend the Grotto. The Lourdes Shrine was enlarged in 1924, year of the visit of Cardinal Bourne; and the Little Flower Shrine in 1925, year of her canonization. Both were rebuilt in 1931.

'The influence of St. Thérèse drew pilgrims from all parts of Scotland, as well as from England, Ireland, and abroad. New shrines were erected mainly through the generosity of the poor. The most noteworthy are: Bethlehem, Calvary, and Christ the King; Nazareth, St. Philomena, and Mount Assisi; Our Lady of the Angels, Our Lady of the Sick and Our Lady, Star of the Sea, known also as Our Lady of Carfin. This tablet is placed in remembrance of the roses, many and marvellous,² showered down on the Grotto during a decade of years. May Our Lady and the Little Flower have in their holy keeping all its pilgrims and benefactors.'

I had intended to see the grotto on a day of pilgrimage

¹ Certain miraculous cures are said to have already taken place.

² An allusion to the dying words of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, 'The Little Flower.'

but circumstances made that impossible and, on the whole, I did not regret them; I could visit the various shrines unimpeded by crowds—in the company only of the usual Sunday devout. To reach Carfin from Glasgow by bus-route is a matter of fourteen miles or so; a somewhat dreary journey in respect of scenery.

The outskirts of Glasgow, then a region of mining shafts and tall chimneys, interspersed with remnants of countryside, and with here and there reminders of a Lanarkshire that knew nothing of tall chimneys and shafts—a Lanarkshire of warring factions and battlefields. Langside, which sent Mary to her prison in England, has largely disappeared beneath Glasgow brick and mortar but the river still flows under Bothwell Brig as it did on the day of disaster to the Covenant. At Hamilton you pass what is left of a ducal park—the rest of it absorbed into the mining town of Motherwell; and in the end the bus drops you at the gate of the grotto—with a large Roman Catholic church on the opposite side of the road.

Like all Catholic places of pilgrimage with which I am acquainted the Carfin grotto combines business with devotion; there is the usual shop at the entrance to the grounds, containing the usual stock-in-trade: devotional books, sacred pictures, rosaries, and medals, many of them reminders of the Little Flower; and the oddments and gewgaws which, to one brought up in another tradition, seem more than a little incongruous: the Five Wounds beads, the pocket-combs marked 'A Present from Carfin,' and the tiepins enamelled with the Sacred Heart! It was a slack afternoon when I was at Carfin—no processions or special services—but even so

customers seemed to be entering the shop in quite satisfactory numbers, and on high days of pilgrimage it must, I imagine, do a more than satisfactory trade. Some idea of the popularity of the grotto, as a place of pilgrimage, may be gathered from its June calendar for 1936. The opening day of the month was marked by the arrival of a party of pilgrims from Dublin; they were eighty in number and included the Deputy Mayor. On the seventh there was a pilgrimage of Franciscan tertiaries, coming from Dumbarton, and another, of Sisters of Mary, from Edinburgh. The eleventh, the Feast of Corpus Christi, was a day given over to the young; there was a general procession of children, including first communicants, and likewise an annual event—a pilgrimage of 400 children from one of the Catholic schools in the Glasgow district.

As already said, the grotto is laid out as a public garden; it is entered from a long and uninteresting street, but on the farther side it looks out over field and hedgerow. There are one or two covered shrines or chapels to which you descend by steps—underground or half underground—but for the most part its holy places are in the open air; little gardens or enclosures, each adorned with its saintly statue or statues. In the enclosure dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, the figure of the Virgin is placed on a green slope planted with shrubs, and lower down the slope is the kneeling girl, Bernadette, to whom the blessed vision was vouchsafed. . . . All curiously unlike the Scotland of tradition, the Scotland of Calvinism, with its proverbial abhorrence of image and dislike of church ornament. There were signs that the garden was about to be extended—a new



Scottish Pictorial Press

A BROTHER SHEPHERD OF THE WHITE FATHERS OF ST. BOSWELLS

strip added to its area, doubtless for the accommodation of more shrines. Which must mean that the grotto is prospering and its fame spreading abroad.

If Carfin is the principal magnet for Scottish Catholic pilgrims, it is by no means the only one; there are older shrines which, from time to time, are the scene of Catholic ceremony. There is the annual mass at Iona where prayers go up for the conversion of Scotland; and at Dunfermline recently there was a pilgrimage—its numbers estimated at 15,000—to mark the opening of a church in honour of St. Margaret of Scotland; the procession, headed by the Archbishop of Glasgow, marched from the station to the Dunfermline football ground where high mass was celebrated in the presence of a kneeling crowd.

On the opposite page is a photograph taken at St. Boswell's, in the Border country, where the White Fathers have recently erected a monastery—whence they send out missionaries for work of conversion in Africa. And although—as result of Irish immigration—Roman Catholicism in Scotland is strongest in the region of Glasgovia, it has spread, taken root, and flourished in many other parts of the country. As witness the following paragraphs—taken from one issue and one page of a Catholic newspaper.¹

The first from Dundee reports a rally of Catholic men: 'To-day contingents of men from the seven parishes, numbering over 2,000, assembled at their respective churches and, preceded by bands discoursing appropriate music, paraded the principal streets here to the city square, thence to the playground of St. Joseph's boys'

¹ *The Scottish Catholic Times*, May 29, 1936.

school to hear an address. . . . The occasion was the annual church parade organized by the diocesan council of the Catholic Young Men's Societies.'

And the second from Leith: 'At the church of St. Mary, Star of the Sea, a great outdoor procession in honour of Our Blessed Lady took place last Sunday. The church was filled to capacity when the service began. . . . The sermon finished, the procession was formed, led by the cross-bearer. The school children came next "and were followed by the various associations belonging to the Church." After these came "the May Queen, attended by her court of eight Maids of Honour and three pages, one of whom carried on a velvet cushion the crown, for the crowning of the statue," and behind her were the altar servers and officiating clergy, while the rest of the congregation brought up the rear of the procession. About 1,000 walked in the procession round the outside of the church, in full view of the main road, and indeed within six yards of the main thoroughfare. It was a sight never to be forgotten. The procession over, the ceremony of the Crowning of the Statue of Our Blessed Lady took place. The statue was placed on a throne immediately outside the sanctuary, amidst a wonderful array of flowers. The May Queen performed the ceremony with touching charm and simplicity. . . .' A public procession in honour of Our Blessed Lady in full view of the main road! Far indeed is Leith from the tradition of John Knox and the day of the Covenanting faithful! ¹

¹ In 1934 the proportion of Roman Catholics to the total adult population of Scotland was estimated at thirteen per cent.

The Roman Catholic priest, as a general rule, exercises more supervision of the daily lives and doings of his flock than do clergy of other denominations; the confessional, of course, is an aid to supervision, by the close relation it establishes. This pastoral control would appear, at times, to have its material, as well as its spiritual, advantages; the priest makes it his business, wherever possible, to obtain employment for the Catholic worker and otherwise aid in his advancement. A Glasgow acquaintance once gave me an instance which she said was typical: a girl employed in a shop was taken ill suddenly and her complaint was sufficiently serious to necessitate a somewhat lengthy absence. As it happened, the girl was of the Catholic faith—and next day, accordingly, her parish priest turned up to interview her employer and ask that her place should be kept open till she was well enough to return. Ready help in such emergencies is of very real value to the wage-earner; if there had been no one to speak for her, a busy employer might have filled the girl's place automatically. And, said my informant, it was not only in the case of illness that the priest intervened on behalf of his charges; the same thing would often happen in the case of a dismissal. The request then would be that a second trial should be given to the culprit—a request that would sometimes, at least, be granted when the offence was not too serious.

As the majority of Catholics in industrial Scotland are of Irish extraction, it is not to be wondered at that the native Scot is sometimes resentful of priestly influence in the matter of employment; which may mean, in practice, a favouring of the Irish as against the Scottish

applicant for work. To the priest, one is told, goes the immigrant landed from Ireland—and the priest, because he is a fellow-Catholic, does his best to get him a job. Impossible for me to know how far the grumbling accusation is correct; but certain it is that one hears it—frequently and expressed with some bitterness. Arguing merely from probabilities, one would say there was something in it; the priest—especially if of Irish blood—is likely to do his best for the Catholic immigrant, to the disadvantage of the native Scot and the further overcrowding of the labour market.¹

Leaving out of count the perennial Irish feud between partisans of the Orange and the Green such antagonism as exists between the Catholic and Protestant communities in Scotland would appear to be largely a matter

¹ George Malcolm Thomson, who does not love either Irishmen or priests, quotes in his *Re-Discovery of Scotland*, a Glasgow out-of-work on this subject of immigrants and their Church. 'Hundreds of times I've seen one of those men (the immigrants from Ireland) pull a dirty little piece of paper from his pocket when he'd stepped down the gangway, and walk up to the policeman and ask him something. I used to wonder what it was, so one day I inquired. He had the address of a priest there and a line from his own priest in Ireland. "Please see Pat Dooley all right, a good son of the Church." Something like that.' The out-of-work went on to give an instance of priestly recommendation. 'Two men . . . came into the yard and went up to one of the foremen, an Irishman. They took out a note and handed it to him. That evening we heard that two men had been sacked—two Scotsmen. . . . Next day the two men I had seen on the previous day joined the gang. They were slower and stupider than the two men who had left. . . . The note they had handed to the foreman was written by a priest. It was a request that he should find work for these two fellow-countrymen of his, new landed from Ireland. You may know that a request from a priest amounts pretty much to a command.'

of race. I have even been assured that it is only the Catholicism of the Irish colony that arouses distrust in the mind of the Protestant Scot; he has no such distrust of the native Catholic community. This, however, would seem to be a somewhat optimistic point of view, with which others whom I questioned on the subject were only partially agreed; though the Knox tradition may have lost its first vigour, it is by no means dead, and an integral part of the Knox tradition is a fear and suspicion of Rome. In Edinburgh, a year or two ago, there was an angry clash on the subject of Catholic schools; education, unfortunately, is not only a means of enlightening the youthful intelligence, it is also a means of training the youthful intelligence in partisanship—and, as such, is liable to become a bone of political contention. The fact that Roman Catholicism insists not only on separate religious education but on separate schools for its children is reasonable enough from its own point of view; but even from that point of view it must have certain disadvantages, since there can be little doubt that the herding of Catholic youngsters apart does make for suspicion in the rest of the community. All the more when the separate herding involves extra expense and calls on the public purse!

XI. ABERDEEN AND THE FISHERIES

TO the Englishman who knows it only by repute, Aberdeen, first and foremost, is the city of the myth economical; the home town of the carthorse that, halting in mid-street and refusing to budge, was discovered, eventually, to have its hoof planted firmly on a halfpenny. Because Aberdonians take obvious pleasure in purveying legends of their own peculiar meanness, one judges them a generous folk whose withers are unwrung by the jest; but be that as it may, such legends are a principal export of the city on the Dee—which also exports (more tangibly) its granite, its fish, and a considerable output of tweed—tailoring tweed, not homespun. Happily the granite is not only produced for export; it goes to the making of the city's houses as well as its public buildings. Because of the prevalence of its shining grey, the moment to see Aberdeen at its best is the April moment after a rain-shower when the sun comes out from behind his cloud and strikes on the glistening stone. It is possible, of course, to build badly with the best of material; Aberdeen itself can afford examples of the fact; but it would be difficult—almost impossible perhaps—to achieve with that solid and dignified stone the shoddy pretentiousness which is a frequent and lamentable characteristic of the post-war building scheme as found in other parts of Great Britain. True, the bungalow is a frequent feature of the Aberdeen suburbs, as it is in



AN ABERDEEN GRANITE QUARRY



C. M. Angus

FISHER LASSIES AT CASTLEBAY, BARRA

other spreading towns of Scotland; but the Aberdeen bungalow is granite-grey and sturdy—it would be an insult to place it in the same class with the pink-roofed, roughcast erections of our English Home Counties. As for the well-to-do quarter of the town where live the professional and business men—their houses, set in a liberal allowance of garden, are sometimes of such dignity, so rightly proportioned, that you stop at their gates to admire. Such guide-books as I have studied on the subject have never, to my thinking, done justice to Aberdeen; which is a city of fine stone, finely placed both by nature and by man; with the North Sea spread before it, with the valley of the Dee and the Grampians at its back. And within its own borders, its university, and ancient cathedral of St. Machar; also the streets and lanes of an Old Town that is surely a legacy from bygone Scotland at its best.

The granite dug from the Aberdeen quarries travels far; at the edge of a precipice whence they had been hewn, I was shown an array of blocks destined for the use and adornment of London, in the making of the new Chelsea Bridge. For those whose heads, like my own, turn easily at heights, a granite quarry may be a fearsome as well as an interesting experience; a pit of huge dimensions, dwarfing the ordinary chalk or stone quarry, from whose cliffs the granite is blasted in the rough, to be sawn and polished in the workshops. Even more important than the trade in granite is Aberdeen's other trade in fish; whereof, on an average, 350 tons a day are landed on the quays, to be dispatched for the most part by fish train. In the year 1936 the trawlers belonging to the port numbered no less than 320; their catch is principally

white fish—such as haddock, cod, whiting, halibut—and their fishing-grounds nowadays are of wide extent; habitually they go as far north as Bear Island and Spitsbergen and for six months of the year to the coast of Greenland for halibut. The longest cruise of the Aberdeen trawler is round the coast of Norway to the White Sea which, there and back, will mean an absence from port of over three weeks; the ordinary voyage in the North Sea being usually about ten days.¹ For these shorter voyages the crew of a steam trawler is usually ten in number, while for the longer cruises as many as twenty will be shipped. As to earnings, the skipper and mate are paid by results, the skipper getting a tenth of the net takings and the mate about a twelfth; the men, on the other hand, are paid a wage but have in addition the right to certain perquisites. One of these perquisites is the liver of the fish; and as halibut liver now fetches two shillings a pound on the market, it is an extra worth adding to the wage. I was told that, including what he makes by his perquisites, the earnings of a man employed in a trawler will average fifteen shillings a day. This system of payment does not obtain throughout the Scottish fishing industry; in one of the ports of the Moray Firth, where boats are smaller and fishing more local, I was told that the custom is sharing terms all round. Like other fishing centres, Aberdeen has its by-product industry, the conversion of what would otherwise be waste into fish-meal. Its component parts are

¹ The fish, of course, is kept fresh by packing it in ice; a practice which was introduced in the 'sixties of the last century and which revolutionized the industry. Before its introduction boats had to work fairly close inshore if their catch was to get fresh to market.

the head, bones, and other inedible portions of the fish; these, ground into meal, are in demand as pig-feed—which in the case of Aberdeen's factories is largely exported to Germany.

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The Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland for the year 1935 gives the number of persons engaged in Scottish fisheries, 'including the various ancillary occupations such as fish-curing, boat-building, and transport services,' as just on 60,000. This total is an increase of 3,000 on the year before, but it is less by 26,000 than the number engaged in the industry in the year 1913. As years are prosperous or the reverse, the number employed in fishing and the trades allied to it goes up or down; but there is little likelihood, under present conditions, that the gap between 60 and 86,000 will be bridged. The fact of decline since the pre-war years must be faced.

On English coasts, also, the number of those who live by the fishing-trade has suffered considerable decrease of late years; but serious though the decrease may be for England, it is by no means so serious as it is for Scotland, where the trade is of more importance to the country and employs proportionately a far greater number of its citizens. Considering that we are an island people, it seems strange that the care and preservation of our fisheries should not be a matter of the first importance to the general public, as well as to those who are set in authority over it; and strange also that, with a plentiful harvest of the sea for our taking, our consumption of fish should not be higher. That spinner of excellent sea-

yarns, 'Taffrail,' in the story, *Seventy North*, which he has written round the deep-sea fishermen of Hull, has a comment on the failure of the British people to make full use of their sea-harvest. 'It was surprising,' so one of his characters ponders, 'to think that of every £100 spent upon food in Great Britain, £34 went on meat; £22 on dairy produce; £11 on cereals; £8 each on sugar and fruit; £7 on vegetables; and only £3 on fish. Thus thirty-four per cent of the nation's housekeeping money went on meat, which was largely imported, and only three per cent on British-caught fish.' That is the purely economic, or housekeeping, aspect of the question, but there is another aspect to which 'Taffrail' alludes when he adds that 'it would be a national calamity if the fishermen and fishing-fleets were further to dwindle away.' In this view he is supported from the Scottish side by Eric Linklater, with customary Linklater energy:¹

'A major argument in the Scottish Nationalists' battery . . . is the way in which all recent governments have neglected the Scottish fishermen. I am not for the moment concerned with the humanitarian aspect of this neglect. I am more concerned by its folly. Surely, to a Conservative at least, the national value of the fishermen should be apparent? The Conservative mind is never forgetful of the problem of national defence; and it is only a few years since we emerged from a war in which the fishermen played a more arduous, heroic, and necessary part than any one except the infantry and the gunners of the front line. Even in time of peace a fisherman is not without value, and in time of war the crew of a drifter is worth much more than a squadron of

¹ *The Lion and the Unicorn*.

Life Guards. . . . Fishermen, in time of war, become mine-sweepers and necessarily reinforce the Royal Navy.' . . . A year or two ago, when the word was disarmament and again disarmament, and the Junior League of Nations Union was being taught by those who should have known better that we could attain to peace by saying, in large numbers, that we wanted it; in those not so far-off and optimistic days, Mr. Linklater's argument would probably have fallen on deaf ears; to-day the public may take it more seriously and even, here and there, deign to interest itself in the efforts of the Herring Board to improve conditions in the industry. It may be that better times are ahead for the fisherman; for the indications are that the policy of the next few years will be to increase our home food supply as against our imported; a policy motivated not only by the possible event of war but by the passing of our former commercial supremacy. Our cheap foreign food is paid for with manufactured goods; which the rest of the world does not need from us so much as it did of yore and may, in the future, need still less. And here be it noted that a decline in the number of men employed in our fisheries is a far more serious—more disastrous—matter than unemployment in almost any urban trade. For in mill or factory the manner of working, as a general rule, can be learned by any one, and without much difficulty; even the labour that is known as skilled is often no more than a matter of customary use. But they that go down to the sea in ships have to acquire, for their business in great waters, something more than the swift mechanical skill that suffices for the working of a loom: a capacity for endurance of bodily hardship, of

bitter cold and wet; the resource and alertness that comes from contact with danger—with the sea, the enemy, who yet provides them with their bread. I said of the peasant, in an earlier chapter, that he was born, not made, and the same is even truer of the fisherman. The fishing of the sea is an hereditary calling; and (treason though it be, in these days of education, to suggest it!) the inherited tradition of those who pursue that calling is often of far greater value to the community than the talents of scholars who do credit to themselves and gratify their teachers by carrying off diplomas and certificates. If the nation were mindful of its real interests, it would probably spend less of its energy and money on the encouragement of young persons who can take certificates—(such young persons can always be trained up when required and their supply nowadays is often in excess of demand)—and more on the encouragement of its fishing population, who are not so easily obtainable.

Incidentally, it is not only the fishing population that is threatened with decline; there is also, in some waters at least, a decline in the fish population. The idea that, thanks to science and its works, plenty for all is only a matter of distribution, and that the human race could increase indefinitely without trenching unduly on its food supply—that is an idea, born in city streets, which may before long receive unpleasant refutation. In the United States, of late years, huge tracts of land that once grew wheat have gone out of cultivation—overswept by dust and ruined. As grass-grown prairie, the soil held together; but the break-up of the prairie into arable land, combined with an unwise cutting down of forests,

has been followed by a deadly enlargement of what is known as the Dust Bowl. Thanks to what yesterday looked like progress, the desert is setting a limit to production of wheat in the United States; and I believe it is the case that in parts of Canada similar causes are beginning to threaten similar effects.¹

And there are warnings, of which we might do well to take heed, that the food of the sea is not inexhaustible and that Nature's methods of production are not those of the machine and the factory. The steam trawler, no doubt, is from most points of view a valuable improvement on the sailing-vessel; but with its greater capacity for catch goes also a greater capacity for destruction of immature fish and, thanks in great measure to its activities, what is known as inshore fishing has in places all but disappeared.²

The trawler of to-day can drag up more fish from the sea than its predecessor of the sailing epoch—a fact which counts with us for progress; but it appears to be

¹ See Note J. The Limits of Food Supply.

² In the *Daily Telegraph* recently (November 1936) there appeared an article describing the plight of the Devon and Cornwall fisherfolk; this was followed by a letter from a correspondent (Mr. Ernest Wilburn) who insisted that 'the same conditions exist all round our coast' and urged restriction on trawling as the only means of reviving the inshore trade. 'Since mechanical means of progress have superseded sails, intense and incessant trawling now takes place. Trawls are let down within a quarter of a mile of the shore and immature fish of little food value are scooped up in enormous quantities—or rather were. These are now becoming scarce as the feeding-grounds of the young fry are being destroyed.' The same complaint is made in Scotland and the closing of the Moray Firth to trawlers—with especial reference to foreign trawlers—is strongly advocated by the Scottish National Party.

doubtful whether Nature will always adapt herself to the needs of progress by proportionate increase in the numbers of her fish population. On the contrary even the deep-sea catch is understood to have been to a certain extent affected by modern methods of fishing.¹ As for the inshore fisherman, whose livelihood is worsened and sometimes destroyed by modern methods, he is the small man of the industry who fishes with lines from his own boat and fishes only a mile or two from land—the small man is always the victim of mechanical progress, so nothing surprising in that! 'In earlier years,' says the Report of the Fishery Board, 'this [small line] method of fishing was actively pursued all round the Scottish coast, but in many districts there has been a transfer of effort to seining and accordingly, while catches of small lines will increase when haddocks return to the inshore grounds, the method is not likely to resume its former importance, though it will still afford employment to a substantial number of fishermen, even if only in a supplementary way, since it can be prosecuted close inshore in small boats without much expenditure of capital.' It was owing to the above-mentioned scarcity of haddock that (according to the Report) Scottish inshore fishing in 1935 had its worst year since the War; while certain it is that in the summer

¹ 'The North Sea yielded 5,500,000 hundredweights in 1913, and nearly 6,500,000 in 1920-2 (that was the result of curtailment of fishing during the War). The yield has now dropped back to 3,750,000 hundredweights, and there has been a very large increase in the proportion of small—and therefore less valuable—fish in the catch. . . . Are there as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it? The question is being investigated. . . .' From a broadcast talk by Mr. Wynn Thomas of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

of 1936 complaints of the state of inshore fishing were frequent in many of the east coast ports.

If the class of line fisherman ceases to exist, it is likely enough that one of the results of its disappearance will be that few—hardly any—of the inhabitants of Great Britain will know the taste of a really fresh sea-fish. A fish, that is to say, which has not, between sea and the fishmonger's slab, passed a period varying from days to weeks on ice. In England at present—perhaps not in Scotland, where fish is more accessible—there are probably some millions of our urban fellow-citizens who have never tasted such a thing, just as they have never tasted a new-laid egg.¹ It is only from the line fisher-

¹ A few years ago, a witness giving evidence in a case connected with the provision trade, stated that no egg under a month old was ever sold in London; there are no doubt exceptions to this general rule but I, myself, should be prepared to accept the statement as substantially correct. Eggs that are good and eatable are sold in London but, so far as my experience goes, one does not obtain there an egg in the really new-laid, milky condition. This persistent withholding of the new-laid article from the market is one of those trade mysteries which the ordinary layman cannot hope to fathom; it will hardly be denied that many thousands of eggs must be produced in poultry farms near enough to London to permit of marketing within a few hours of being laid; why then are they all held back and subjected to a process of maturing—which not only lessens their value, but must call for expenditure on storage? Storage of a moiety of output is comprehensible enough; hens have their seasons of fertility and barrenness, and provision must be made for the latter. But why place the whole of the output in store? Why cannot a percentage, even a small one, be placed on the London market ere the milk of its youth has dried? The question seems unanswerable except by those who keep their trade secret, unless one supposes a strong sense of fair play on the part of the English egg-dealer; a handicapping of his native product, so that it shall start fair with the foreigner's egg, arriving from the ends of the earth.

man who goes out in his boat for a few hours that even the seaside dweller or visitor can be sure of obtaining a haddock or a whiting that is fresh with the freshness of the sea, not the ice-box. . . . Curious how mechanism, in all departments of life, works for the standardization of our habits, abolishing local idiosyncrasies of food as well as variety in clothing; like water in the realm of physical geography, it is the levelling agent that smoothes away our human differences.

At present (fortunately or unfortunately) local differences of taste still exist; one of them—as I learned in Scotland of the fisheries—a difference between Scottish and English palates in the matter of a kippered herring. If I were to state that all kippers destined for the English market are dyed to please the eye of the English purchaser, the chances are that some irate importer or indignant fishmonger would straightway sue me for libel; so I here add, firmly, expressly, and formally, that there may be—must be—exceptions to the general rule and practice. But in more than one fishing-port and by many persons engaged in the trade I was informed that the Southron when he bought his kippers, insisted on a strong, brown complexion; hence it was necessary to humour this preference with a dash of brunette make-up.¹ Lest any take alarm at the mention of make-up, eschew a wholesome food and thereby increase the difficulties of a none-too-prosperous herring industry, let me hasten to inform them that the treatment is perfectly harmless. That I have been assured, on authority good and disinterested; the dyeing is no aniline process, just a dip into some

¹ I am told by a Scot who has read the above that the preference for brunette kippers is also spreading in Scotland.

browning mixture. An elderly fisherman of Wick who was one of the experts with whom I discussed the matter of local taste in kippers, told me that, in his opinion, the substance of the southbound fish was even more important than their colour; the Englishman's kippers must be 'moisty' in their eating—softer and damper than the kippers you sell to the Scot. And, judging by my own experience, that elderly expert was stating no more than the fact; for seldom or never on an English plate is one served with the drier and lighter-coloured kipper which (although no Scotswoman) I consider preferable to the flabbier English brunette.

One form of cured fish which, in the days of my youth was commonly purchasable on the north-east coast of Scotland, has now disappeared so completely from the market that a younger generation shook its head and looked puzzled when I made my inquiries for 'black fish.' The black fish as I knew it was just what its name implies and, as such, not over-inviting in appearance; I should think it highly unlikely that it was ever served on the tables of the best hotels. In its original, unblackened condition it had been anything from a cod to a whiting or a herring; and perhaps on account of its forbidding appearance it was cheap, extraordinarily cheap. In places like Fraserburgh and Peterhead I have paid a penny for an excellent haddock of negroid complexion that was large enough to provide me with two good meals. When it came to eating, you removed the black skin—and it really was black—and inside your haddock or whiting was of ordinary colour and consistency. It seemed as if nowadays even the memory of the swarthy fish had vanished from the

regions where once it had been cured and sold in abundance; but finally an old gentleman in the fish-curing trade to whom I put a question concerning the black fish replied with a nod instead of a shake—he had eaten them and knew all about them. Their curing, it appeared, was essentially a home industry. In many old cottages where the chimneys were wide, if you looked up them you would often see there were hooks projecting from the stonework; it was from these hooks that the fish would be suspended, to dry and blacken in the smoke from the hearth—the smoke of a peat fire. When or why this former home industry died out my old gentleman could not be sure; he was fairly sure, however, that in his part of the world, at any rate, it was not carried on to-day.

The white fish side of the fishing industry is its more prosperous side; for the reason that its products—its cod, its halibut, its hake, and its whiting—are disposed of entirely, or almost entirely, in the home market, so it is not hampered by tariffs or restrictions of quota. The herring fishery, on the other hand, is a trade that depends largely on foreign custom; our people do not eat herring in sufficient quantities to keep the fleet that follows the shoals round the coast. In times past it was eaten far more generally, especially in Scotland; now it is a fish out of fashion—perhaps, as has sometimes been suggested, by reason of a cheapness which is held to imply vulgarity. Germany and Russia, which once imported largely of herring, now restrict their purchases to what they cannot do without; the policy of one

as of the other is to buy as little as possible abroad and so far as possible exist on their own resources. Nearly all the fresh herring exported go to Germany, mostly to pickling and preserving factories; if you order a Bismarck herring in a London restaurant, the chances are you are ordering a fish that, in its pre-Bismarck state was exported in a barrel from Wick or Aberdeen, crossed the North Sea to the factories of Altona, and from Altona once more took ship, for England. Germany is also the largest buyer of cured herring; in 1935 she took over forty per cent of the total Scottish export; but it must be borne in mind she is steadily endeavouring to increase her own production of cured fish. After Germany, Poland (with which, for herring purposes, is included the Free State of Danzig) is Scotland's best customer; the Soviet Union has been a buyer of late years, but her Government's niggardliness with regard to prices has sometimes had niggard effects upon prices in general.

On the quay at Wick I once watched consignments of herring (destined for Germany and the Soviet Union) being gutted and packed in their barrels; the gutters—girls and women—getting through their work with the amazing slickness that comes of long practice therein. Three of them, working together, make up what is called a crew; one of the two packs the fish into a barrel after the other two have gutted them, a feat which they accomplish at a truly astonishing pace. The skilled rate, I believe, is about two seconds per herring—thirty a minute; and as they finish with their herring they fling it over their shoulder into one of the baskets standing behind them—always the right basket for its size—

whence the third member of the crew removes it to pack in her barrel. As is well known, these girls, in the wake of the fishing-fleet, move along the coast from port to port; and those many among them who have their homes in the Western Isles must get through a considerable amount of migration before they finish up the season in one of the English coast towns. Their earnings, as a matter of course, vary with the luck of the season; the Fishery Report for 1935 gives their average earnings for the three 'fishings' of the year—the Scottish winter and summer and the East Anglian autumn—as £3, £15, and £16 respectively; £34 in all.

Not a high wage when the hardship of the work is considered, but £7 higher than the average of 1934. In addition, their travelling expenses are paid and they receive, on engagement, an extra payment, known as 'arles,' or earnest-money, as token of work for the season.

Working-clothes adapted to the use of the trade and the comfort of the wearer usually have a touch of the picturesque about them, and the working-kit of the gutters and packers, as I saw it at Wick, was no exception to the rule. Details varied according to personal taste, but a typical get-up was sweater, knee-skirt, protected by an oilskin apron, long rubber boots, and a handkerchief tied round the head. In some cases an ordinary waterproof overall—the kind that is worn for housework—was substituted for the oilskin apron. The day when I watched them at their gutting and packing the season was midsummer and the sun was a glare on the quay; but when the sun is in, and the wind is out, the gutting and packing of fish must

be a bitter job. Still, if you are bred to it, probably a healthy one, judging by the looks of the rubber-booted lassies whom I saw stride away from the quay to the streets when midday gave them their half-hour's respite for a meal.

XII. GAMES AND ENTERTAINMENTS

IN the sporting columns of the Scottish Press you will find nowadays, in the summer season, that considerable space is devoted to details and results of cricket matches. This, to the best of my belief, is a change from the days of my youth; the game-playing Scots of my generation were usually more or less contemptuous of cricket. It was a game to which the English were addicted, and they were content to leave it at that; some of them had learned to play it at school but, even so, they were indifferent. Now, judging by the matches reported in the Press, cricket has crossed the Border for good and made itself a Scottish institution, perhaps as a result of the sending of boys to public schools in England. (This is a custom said to have increased considerably of late, and which I have several times heard good Nationalists lament, as conducive to a weakening of Scottish characteristics.) I have never seen a cricket match played in Scotland, but in one boy's school over which I was shown some of the elder lads were practising at the nets; being as ignorant of cricket as I am of most games, I cannot tell whether they were batting and bowling efficiently but, to all appearances, they were batting and bowling with keenness.

But though cricket has obviously gained ground in Scotland, the game of all games there is football; not, as the uninformed Southron might imagine, the royal and



James Russell, Alexandria
UNEMPLOYED GIRLS' CHOIR AND SPORTS

ancient game of golf. True, golf is a product of Scottish origin which Scotland exports to the world—have I not met one skilled in the laying of golf-courses who has plied his calling as far afield as Japan? True, it is also a more democratic pastime than in England; in certain districts there are facilities for cheap golf, and very cheap golf, denied to dwellers in the South. But though champions of the game assemble at Dornoch and St. Andrews; and though golfers assemble from the corners of the kingdom and stand open-mouthed to watch their every stroke; yet the interest of the sporting public of Scotland is mild indeed as compared to its furious joy in football. I use the term 'furious joy' of set purpose for there is something more than excitement and enthusiasm in the roar of a Scottish football crowd. I know nothing of the rules and manoeuvres of football, whether of the Soccer or Rugby variety, and I don't believe I have ever in my life seen a game of either variety from beginning to end; but a good many times, both in England and Scotland, I have been within earshot of football crowds giving tongue; and unless I am mistaken, very much mistaken, the football emotion of the Scottish crowd sounds more fiery than that of the English. Lions roaring after their prey were not in it with the massed enthusiasm I once heard thundering while a match was in progress somewhere in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. As elsewhere, betting is part of the attraction of the game; while as regards the vehemence of local partisanship, it may be that football affords an outlet for the ancient spirit of clan rivalry and feud that is not yet wholly extinct. . . . A Scottish devotee of the game once assured me that football, like

golf, was first played in his native country and, like golf, spread thence round the world; since he evidently believed the statement and was proud of Caledonia's gift to the human race, I did not tell him that, a year or two before, the member of an Italian football team had assured me, with an air of entire conviction, that the game originated in classic Italy and (with some modifications) had been handed down from the days when the Caesars ruled in Rome. In all probability there are other Richmonds in the football field; but as any child in possession of a ball will, sooner or later, be moved to kick it, the chances are that the game of football, in some form or other, was invented all over the world.

Being ignorant of football finance, I do not know whether its gates and pools bring money into the country; but of this I am sure—golf does; when the season comes round, the letting of houses at North Berwick and similar golfing resorts in itself must be a profitable industry. And now that the game is played from China to Peru, a lad of spirit who would like to see something of the world might do worse than get himself born at St. Andrews or Dornoch or North Berwick, where from childhood up he will be familiar with golf as the masters play it, and have every chance, if he so desires, of growing up into a professional. Since the name and reputation of his native town will be known to the *élite* of the golfing world, he is likely enough to get a well-paid post in some continental health resort bent on attracting the golfer.

Also an attraction to visitors, and therefore a money-maker, is the Highland gathering, with its contests in dancing and piping; as it affords good photographic copy

to the newspapers it gets plenty of publicity, and in its better-known manifestations will attract spectators by the thousand. So the weather be favourable, the gathering is a gay and picturesque entertainment; but thanks no doubt to its growing popularity with the general public—in some instances, at least—its character, of late years, has undergone a change. It has become, to a certain extent, the hunting-ground of the professional, or semi-professional, piper or dancer who carries off prizes as against the local amateur; that it is to say, it is more of a show than in days gone by and less of a friendly local contest.¹

Scotland is no exception to the rule that the drama of the living actor gives place to the photographic play. Even in the palmy day of touring, its good-class theatres were not numerous; Glasgow and Edinburgh were the 'No. 1's,' visited, out of the pantomime season, by provincial companies playing London successes; and in the autumn, when London was theatrically dull, packing their houses for a week or a fortnight of Irving or Wyndham or Tree. The only other towns of any note—towns, that is to say, where money could be made by a manager who did not run his show on the cheap—were Aberdeen and Dundee. The palmy day of provincial touring has been over for a good many years; nowadays the dramatic or musical comedy company is

¹ I have never been a witness of the rural game of shinty but I believe it is much the same thing as the Irish hurley; this is a species of hockey in which the players seem to break their sticks with great frequency.

no longer a weekly arrival at Dundee and Aberdeen; and as for the towns of less importance, which once had their regular visits from minor companies, it is only now and then that the play with living actors ventures to compete with their 'pictures.' Edinburgh and Glasgow are not only the two dramatic centres of the country; they are the only towns where plays can be seen with regularity, being served, and well served, in part by touring companies and also, for most of the year, by the Brandon Thomas Repertory which has now become a local institution. It runs each play it produces for a week in both cities and so mitigates, to a certain extent, the overwork which is the bane of repertory companies.

Although it has become a Scottish institution, the Brandon Thomas Repertory did not start life as such; on the contrary, it came into being in England, as a touring company playing a repertory of half a dozen modern comedies. The year of its birth was 1930; a dangerous year for any new theatrical enterprise, since the world slump was making its steady and dismal progress, and the theatre, being a luxury trade, is always the first to suffer when the public draws its purse-strings. The capital behind the company was slender, too slender to permit of elaborate productions, and scenery, in the beginning, was obtained second-hand or on loan. It opened in the north, at Newcastle, and struggled through its early life with varied luck; at Margate which, thanks to the slump, had suffered the worst summer season on record, its manager dropped £150; at Eastbourne the fates were kinder and it made up its losses—and succeeded in finishing its first year of existence with a balance. For a time the company worked principally on

the south coast; at Bournemouth where they paid several lengthy visits, at Torquay, Brighton, Folkestone — 'where,' says Mr. Brandon Thomas in his account of the company's ups and downs, 'I made a goodly profit and to Hastings where I lost it all again.'¹ Against the disastrous effects of the slump, the 'Rep' struggled on gamely. 'If we were . . . to cut down expenses, the result would be poor productions and bad shows. We decided against it. The company insisted on carrying on at all costs. They played parts and doubled with other parts. They became their own staff, and it was wonderful to see half the cast acting on the stage while the spare members were reproducing a thunderstorm in the wings. . . . They were hard times but very happy ones.' But in spite of goodwill and efforts at economy, it looked, at the end of 1932, as though the shutters would have to be put up; and then, as result of an earlier visit, came an invitation in the nick of time from Howard and Wyndham, the proprietors of the Lyceum Theatre, to run a season in Edinburgh. The knowing ones shook their heads more than doubtfully at the idea of a repertory season in Edinburgh. There wasn't the ghost of a chance of making good—so the knowing ones assured the venturesome manager and company. 'You'll be back in three weeks' was the cold comfort administered. As it turned out, the knowing ones were hopelessly wrong; the season was extended again and again, running finally to fourteen weeks; so successful had it been that, at its conclusion, the Lyceum management suggested that the company should try their luck in its Glasgow theatre, the Royal. The company chronicler

¹ Jevan Brandon Thomas, *Rep.*

writes that 'it was the hardest theatre we ever tackled but after the first anxious weeks the business started to move . . . our season was extended and business grew with every performance. That Christmas (1933) we paid our last visit down south before settling in Scotland.' The days are past when the company was obliged to deny itself elaborate productions; it has its own workshops in Edinburgh where it turns out all its own scenery and in the year 1936, in both Glasgow and Edinburgh, it was averaging ten thousand spectators a week.

It so happened that I was in Edinburgh when the repertory company was producing an historical play written by one of its own actresses—Margot Lister—and dealing with the Scottish epoch in the life of Mary Queen of Scots—the Darnley marriage and subsequent tragedy, and the other tragedy of Mary's abandonment by Bothwell. The play itself was an instant success, the acting was good, the mounting unusually so; but if author or actors should read these words, they will, I hope, forgive me when I say that what interested me even more than the play was the attitude towards it of the Glasgow and Edinburgh public. 'That our audiences would feel kindly towards it we had little doubt'—so writes Mr. Brandon Thomas, discussing the production—'but our wildest expectations never imagined such a reception. The overflow booking was so tremendous that we had to put on six extra matinées (in a fortnight's run) and we sold out both theatres at every performance. In eighteen performances we played to no less than forty-two thousand people.'

I was in Edinburgh while this play, *Swords about the*

Cross, was being rehearsed; and what struck me was the interest it aroused in the public before its production, merely because it was written round Mary Queen of Scots. Playgoers did not wait till the papers came out with their first night notices; they flocked in large numbers to the box-office to make sure of their seats. *Swords about the Cross* was the work of a dramatist unknown to the playgoing public; but, her subject being the luckless Mary, the playgoing public of Edinburgh and Glasgow promptly made up its mind to book. I stress the fact because it illustrates a difference between the Scot and the Englishman upon which I have remarked more than once; the Englishman's lack of interest in his national past, as compared with the Scot's awareness of it. There is no personage in English history, however sympathetic or however heroic, who would, as the central figure of a play, set the ordinary public running to the box-office and booking their seats in advance. There is, maybe, a certain English pride and interest in Nelson; but, thanks to pacifist teaching, that has probably decreased of late years and, even at its best, it was never strong enough to be a valuable box-office factor. There have been plays and successful plays dealing with the life of Queen Elizabeth; but the announcement of Her Majesty's appearance on the boards does not mean a rush for seats. The box-office factor in our so-called historical film dramas has nothing to do with awareness of the past; their success is due in part to the personality of the stars, in part to opportunities for decorative effects and picturesque costume—historical accuracy being a minor consideration, at times so minor as to be non-existent. The interest of a Scottish

audience in *Swords about the Cross* was of an altogether different type; the interest of those to whom their national past is a reality.

As in England, so in Scotland, the drama, having been cast out of the professional theatre, has found shelter and welcome with the amateur; Scottish amateur companies are numerous in all walks of life and the Scottish Drama League is a flourishing institution. There was a time when the Drama Leagues of England and Scotland joined forces; now they run their separate ways and administer their own spheres of influence. This, I was told, by one who had acted as judge in the contests, was a desirable change—and the reason he gave for thinking so was curious. English judges, he said, were inclined to be over-appreciative of Scottish actors when they appeared in dialect plays. Their tendency was to give credit and marks for a manner of speech which in most cases was natural to the actors and had nothing of talent about it. The Women's Rural Institutes¹ are another agency which fosters the cult of the drama, often in remote country districts—in the Western Islands plays are sometimes produced in Gaelic. The wide-spread interest of his countrymen in the amateur theatre and matters theatrical has been commented on by more than one Scottish writer; and proof (it seems to me) of the reality of that interest is the fact that Scotland has produced a post-war playwright who, for sheer originality and power of giving expression to the realities of life—the realities, not merely the superficialities—stands

¹ In England simply Women's Institutes.

alone among the younger generation of dramatists. The Glasgow doctor who, for theatrical purposes, has dubbed himself James Bridie could not have learned to see life as he sees it, in terms of the stage, in a world that was entirely indifferent to the art and craft of the theatre.

XIII. EDINBURGH AND MATTERS ARISING THEREFROM

It is perhaps because I find it difficult to write of Edinburgh and not write chiefly of that which is ancient that I have left this chapter till so late. My acquaintance with the city is of long standing; but even to-day when I return there I recapture some of the tremor of excitement, incredulous excitement, with which I first looked at a fabulous castle on a fabulous rock fading in the grey of after-sunset. . . . The younger generation of his countrymen may or may not be faithful to their Walter Scott; in England, I believe, the younger generation has long since discarded him as boring—and that being the case, their first view of Edinburgh will be differently coloured from mine. For I, in the days of an impecunious childhood, amassed rarely-given pence in a money-box till they sufficed for the purchase of *Tales of a Grandfather*, and lit surreptitious candles when my gas had been put out, that I might gloat on yet another chapter of the *Abbot* or the *Heart of Midlothian*. So that when, for the first time, I walked in Edinburgh I walked in company that Scott had made beloved and familiar. . . .

In the New Town as the Old, and in every age till the Age of Industrialism, the men who built Edinburgh were inspired by their site. 'The result of congenially bold building on a uniquely bold site is a wildly varied beauty that defies description and analysis. Shakespeare did not try to describe Cleopatra. Why should one try

to describe Edinburgh?' . . . So William Power;¹ with whom (since I am not writing of Old Edinburgh) I shall but signify my humble assent and pass on.

As with Glasgow and most great cities of the world, Edinburgh's post-war years have been a period of increasing numbers and extending girth; her new suburbs thrust steadily to all points of the compass, obliterating age-old landmarks. On that long-ago, wonderful first visit of mine I walked out to Craigmillar along an open road and came back deviously, by fieldways, where to-day are the streets of South Edinburgh; now, if you walk along the road to Craigmillar there are houses, houses all the way. To be accurate, when I last walked it, there was still a stretch of green between the main road and the ruin itself; but that, I was told, would not long be undisturbed—it had been acquired for one of the many municipal housing schemes. Other of these schemes have already come into existence in the neighbourhood; one, at Niddrie Mains showing its reminder of a changing Edinburgh in the shape of a Catholic school. Close by is the group of Edinburgh breweries—breweries of several different companies from whose sight I first realized how extensive is the trade in Scottish beer; being English, I had always associated Scotland with whisky and nothing but whisky!

What has been said, in an earlier chapter, concerning the solidity of old Glasgow building—its disadvantage as well as its advantage—applies to old Edinburgh building, as indeed to that of all Scotland; while, as every visitor to the city knows, some of its most insanitary quarters were once the dwellings of the great.

¹ In *My Scotland*.

In the day of Burns and the youthful Scott fashionable and literary Edinburgh lived in and around the Canon-gate and High Street, even the Cowgate, and went in and out of the narrow closes that a later generation knew as slums. It was in the early years of the nineteenth century that the New Town arose in its classic dignity and by its very existence bettered the standard of Edinburgh living. An example in the art of town-planning is this Edinburgh of an earlier Georgian epoch; but it is one thing to give an example, another to get it followed—as the suburbs of to-day bear witness. Into the wider streets and more comfortable rooms of the New Town moved aristocracy, alike of birth and intellect; and the houses that had sheltered themselves and their forebears began their descent in the Edinburgh social scale.

Edinburgh's population at the census-taking of 1931 was 429,000—between a third and a half of that of Glasgow; but if area and not population be taken as test, she is one of the three largest cities in Great Britain, being exceeded only by the area of London and Birmingham. Her size is due in part to the many open spaces within her boundaries; in part to the fact that the New Town was built at an age when land was cheap and ideas were finely spacious; and also, I imagine, to the other fact that in her modern suburbs the bungalow is a frequent form of dwelling. Its prevalence, and the allowance of garden that goes with it, suggests that land is still fairly cheap within the bounds of municipal Edinburgh; and its erection in numbers has resulted, of late years, in a considerable exodus from the flats of the central districts. As elsewhere in Scotland, the Edin-

burgh bungalow is usually a solid erection; all the same, I was told that tenants coming from the centre of the town sometimes complain of the difficulty of keeping it warm. The proverbial winds of an Edinburgh winter find entry more easily to a building exposed on all four sides than they do into a flat well sandwiched into a block.

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In Edinburgh to-day one of the essential sights to which the stranger is directed is the Scottish National War Memorial, within the precincts of the Castle; a comprehensive memorial in which every Scottish regiment has its niche, every name its record—and the small and great beasts who gave ignorant service in the slaughter of mankind are likewise remembered with pity. It stands on the site of a barrack building of the eighteenth century which, in its turn, replaced a medieval chapel of St. Mary. 'It is certain'—so writes J. J. Bell—'that no monument in Scotland has ever moved the hearts of so many people, even those to whom it has no direct personal appeal'; and by another writer¹ it has been described as 'the greatest war memorial in the world.' The monument is entered by a porch surmounted by an emblem of immortality, a figure representing the Survival of the Spirit; beyond is the barrel-vaulted Hall of Honour, with memorials to the various Scottish regiments, to the Scots of the Navy and the Air Force; and beside them the Rolls of Honour with the names of those who served and fell. In the Shrine, or sanctuary, beneath the figure of Michael, the warrior angel, is an altar and on it a casket

¹ H. V. Morton, *In Search of Scotland*.

—the gift of George V and Queen Mary; it contains 100,000 names, the names of the Scots who came to die from every corner of the world; it rests effectively on a peak of living rock which thrusts through the polished granite of the floor. The stained-glass windows with their various symbolic designs, the bronze frieze which shows women as well as men in their wartime uniforms, the decorations of every kind are the work of Scottish craftsmen. . . . Most Scots, I imagine, would agree that 'no monument has ever moved the hearts of so many (Scottish) people'; certain it is that all Scots who have spoken to me of the memorial have spoken with pride, sometimes with very great pride; hence, from this moment, I go forward with diffidence. Impossible to deny the memorial the qualities of reverence, solemnity, and beauty; and, neighboured as it is by the work of old centuries, impossible to imagine a building whose architect had not adapted his style to its environment—standing where it does, this Gothic Memorial is right. But, against all Scotland, I shall hold my stubborn thought that it might have been righter, infinitely righter, if it had not been cramped by the overpowering Castle, if it had not been forced to conform to the Gothic—if it had been given a site in some bare open field, to develop untraditioned, as a monument of war as we knew it. For—save in details of its decoration—those it commemorates might have served in the epoch of musket and lance, might have died at Pinkie or at Philiphaugh rather than Gallipoli or Flanders. There are war memorials of the German peoples—there are even one or two of the English—which have been inspired not by the old traditions of fighting-men, but

by the actual experience of 1914-18 and the new phase of scientific massacre, with its dominance of Machine over Man. (The Gunners' Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, for instance!) Edinburgh of yesterday flung away tradition and created a New Town—created it with dignity and vision, in accordance with the needs of the age; Edinburgh of to-day, when it comes to the making of that which shall endure, holds fast to tradition and erects a building that reverent as it is, in no wise expresses the spirit of its age—which, in war as in peace, is the age of the machine and of science. Rightly or wrongly it seems to me that any war memorial built in this twentieth century of ours must—if it claim the quality of greatness—show man as the victim of his own progress, nailed to the cross of his own making. . . . With the above, I suspect, few Scots will be found to agree; but all the same, I hold to it.

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Princes Street is counted as one of the finest streets in the world. Considered as building, this is simply not so! its beauty lies in what it looks at, not in what it is itself. In character it suggests High Street, Kensington, with a wondrous panorama attached — though maybe the comparison with High Street does it an injustice; on the Edinburgh pavement you do not get the deadly impression you do in Kensington of people meandering about and looking in shop windows because they have not much else in the way of occupation or interest. The Princes Street throng is a brisker, brighter entity; even in shopping hours less predominantly feminine, because it is a parade as well as a shopping centre—

people walk there for pleasure of walking, as well they may, with so much of glorious to look at.¹ On the mile between the Waverley and Caledonian Stations, the citizens of Edinburgh go to and fro—the citizens, that is to say, who are well clad and likewise shod; and having had their fill of going to and fro, the chances are they will turn in at the door of that Edinburgh institution, the tea-room.

The Edinburgh teashop is an establishment of a very

¹ Mr. Edwin Muir, in his *Scottish Journey*, makes some interesting comparisons between the street life of the Scot and the Englishman. 'There is,' he says, 'far more street life in Scottish cities than there is, for instance, in London. Why this should be so, I do not know; perhaps it is a relic of French influence, which was once powerful in Scotland; but a more probable explanation is that, in a country of few amusements, and these mostly frowned on, walking out to see the world acquired the rank of a rare pleasure. Indoor enjoyment is now cheap and accessible in Edinburgh . . . but the habit of walking the streets and looking at the world is still an essential part of Scottish town life. This outdoor habit makes life in Scotland less enclosed, less an exclusively private affair than it is in England. The people in the streets at least look at one another . . . and no eccentricity in a passer-by escapes them. . . . In London (a man) can walk the most crowded streets for hours without feeling that he is either visible or existent; a disconcerting, almost a frightening, experience for a Scotsman until he gets used to it. But the crowd in a London street is mainly composed of people who are going somewhere.' . . . Mr. Muir is right as regard the streets of central London—the people who walk them generally are going somewhere; but on a Saturday night in High Street, Balham, and its many counterparts in the less fashionable regions of London, people will turn into them because there are lights and plenty of other people. And they will walk up and down for the sake of walking up and down—those of them who are not shopping or do not go into the 'pictures'; but all the same the various little parties and couples will not as a rule, like their Scottish equivalents, be keenly observant of strangers.

different type from its opposite number in London—which caters mainly for a class accustomed to mass-produced food and appreciative rather than resentful of clatter and rush in its surroundings. In Edinburgh, on the other hand, the typical teashop atmosphere is more leisured, more decorous; it is true that on one occasion recently I found myself distressingly adjacent to a saxophone but that misfortune was due to the fact that, arriving late at a crowded hour, the only vacant table was in the room afflicted with jazz. In the matter of cakes the tea-room is a place hard to beat; harder still in the matter of edibles accompanied by butter—oat-cakes and every sort of scone; as the discerning customer will note with thankfulness, its dainties at present suggest not the factory but the oven. The larger establishments let off rooms for meetings; women's associations which, in England, would meet in an hotel or restaurant, in Edinburgh will meet in a teashop. On one or two occasions, when visiting the city, I have been asked to 'say a few words' there.

It is possible that what may be termed the higher rank of the Scottish teashop, as compared with the English, is due to the traditional barring of women from places where alcohol is consumed. By that it must not be understood that the teashop is not patronized by men—on the contrary they form a considerable proportion of its customers; but it was not primarily for their service that it came into being. Everywhere, as women took to business—and as suburbs grew and their women travelled citywards for shopping—there came into existence the teashop, for provision of cheap meals unaccompanied by alcohol; but whereas in England the

growth of the teashop was followed before long by an expansion of the restaurant which does serve alcohol, and which nowadays, by its fixed-price lunches, caters largely for the woman shopper, such expansion still lags in Scotland. Save in hotel dining-rooms and a few restaurants in the larger cities, the places where alcohol is obtainable are not frequented by women; and that fact must be, in part at least, accountable for the character and development of the tea-room.

It was on one of the 'islands' of Princes Street that I first noticed the method adopted by municipal Edinburgh of warning citizens against dangers to their health and safety; this method may not be peculiar to the Scottish capital but I myself do not remember having seen it in any other town. The warnings take the form of notices affixed to lamp standards; the particular standards selected being those adjacent to the halting-places of the tram service. The notice that caught my eye referred to spitting; the Medical Officer of Health had pointed out the danger of the habit. Another was a grimly sensible reminder of the ever-present peril of swiftly-moving traffic and the need for pedestrian caution; it gave the casualty figures for a recent month — five persons, in that month, had been done to death in the Edinburgh streets and seventy others had been injured. This lethal information, I doubt not, is kept up to date; and it struck me as an excellent method of rubbing in the necessity for watchfulness and so keeping down the death-rate of the road. The official whose bright idea it was to post the notices at spots where they are bound to be read, in the course of the day, by the considerable numbers of Edinburgh citizens who stand and wait



EDINBURGH

Scottish Travel Association

for their trams—that official has probably saved many lives and deserves the thanks of his countrymen!

To the south of St. Giles's is an open space which was once a graveyard — John Knox lies buried there, with little ostentation as to monument. In Edinburgh of to-day it is known as Parliament Square, one side of the square being formed by the Parliament House in which are held the Courts of Session. The most imposing part of the building is the Parliament Hall, with its oak roof and floor; it was here that for the latter years of its existence the Scots Parliament held its sittings, here that, in the year 1707, the Act of Union was passed and its separate life came to an end. Its last moments were anything but peaceful; the mob had to be kept at a distance while the clauses of the Treaty were got through; Edinburgh was in a turmoil and not Edinburgh alone; there was rioting in Glasgow, there was even arming and drilling in parts of the country. But all the same, the Act of Union went through; though its opponents were many, they were unable, as has often happened in Scotland, to sink their differences and combine for a common object. In spite of their rioting, the citizens of Glasgow were probably more than reconciled to the union before many years had passed, since it brought them substantial advantages in the way of colonial trade; Edinburgh, on the other hand, lost with her Parliament some of the advantages bestowed by a capital status.¹

¹ Characteristic of the uncertainty of royal power in medieval Scotland and the frequent partition and decentralization of authority is the fact that the country had no established capital until the end of the Middle Ages. It was not until the sixteenth century that the

Such advantages are real; the tendency of a capital is to attract the talent and culture of a country and absorb it; and after the passing of the Act of Union, and the centring of Scottish government in Westminster, it was inevitable that London should exercise a greater attraction for the Scot. In the eighteenth century, however, travel was difficult and changes were slow; hence it took time, and long time, for the full attraction of the south to be felt; and Edinburgh's loss of political dignity was followed by her epoch of highest attainment in art and in literature. It was before London was brought nearer by the railway system that her New Town was designed in imaginative dignity, that her painting rose to its height in the work of Raeburn and that her name, throughout Europe, stood for supremacy in literature.¹

By 1848 Edinburgh and London had been connected by an unbroken railway system and the journey between them was reduced to a matter of hours; once that link

position was definitely assumed by Edinburgh, whose citizens soon realized that it meant increase of prosperity as well as increase of dignity; in one of the latter years of the century James VI quelled a serious outbreak of rioting by a proclamation stating his intention of removing the capital to Linlithgow. The immediate result of the threat was a calming down of the Edinburgh population; and in the end 'gentle King Jamie' (who was invariably in a state of extreme impecuniosity) was induced to rescind his decree, in return for a payment of thirty thousand marks by a capital which had seen the wisdom of reconversion to loyalty!

¹ London in the reign of George II was still nearly a fortnight's journey from Edinburgh; in 1754 the schedule time was twelve days in winter, ten in summer. Roads in the next twenty years were greatly improved; in the seventeen-seventies a fast coach reduced the journey to four days, and before the reign of George III had ended it was still further reduced to something like two and a half.

between the capitals was forged, the pull of the south was able to exert its full strength, and the classes that most readily responded to the English pull were inevitably those literary and professional classes which, in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, had given to Edinburgh its especial distinction and renown. The English universities of Oxford and Cambridge attracted young men whose fathers' education had been completed in Scottish seats of learning; the professional man, as well as the writer, found wider opportunities awaiting him in London than in his native capital of Edinburgh. . . . The same process, of course—the same unfortunate process—has long been at work in the provinces of England, attracting ambition and brains from the counties to London; but it is only natural that Scotland, keenly conscious of her separate, her national individuality, should resent it more keenly than the English provinces—since London, after all, is England.

It has been pointed out in an earlier chapter that Glasgow, and not Edinburgh, is to-day the chief centre of Scotland's literary activity; and it may be that, in addition to the reasons already put forward, Glasgow owes something of her literary predominance to the fact that, as a city of trade and industry—until recently a city of expanding trade and industry—she is able to retain and interest ambition which, in Edinburgh, turns to the south. The surroundings in which the young men of Glasgow find themselves may not give the incentive that comes from tradition and the spirit of the past but they express the outlook and thought of a community that is vigorously active in the present.

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Edinburgh is not an industrial city—it would be something of an insult to her stateliness to think of her as such; but even the passing visitor may realize that it would be impossible for a city of 400,000 odd to exist without some form of industry. Even with the aid of a tourist traffic, the professional classes, *rentiers* and shopkeepers, could not, of themselves, keep a large population in being. The industry of Edinburgh may not be obtrusive but it exists, and in terms of importance. The output of beer (and good beer) I have mentioned in an earlier chapter; there is a colony of several firms out Duddingston way and—somewhat unfortunately—another brewery has established itself in close neighbourhood to the Royal Palace of Holyrood. Edinburgh printing has long had a high reputation, and among the other more important industries are rubber and production of carpets. Nearby are famous paper mills. As in another capital—Vienna—the industrial tradition of Edinburgh is one of craftsmanship and production of ‘quality’ goods; hence it is distinctly saddening to be told, on the authority of one who has studied industrial needs, that the old tradition is hampering the city’s prosperity. In an interesting *Study of Industrial Edinburgh* its author, Nora Milnes, warns those it may concern against over-concentration on the high-class and neglect of democratic cheapness. We live in an age when those who would prosper must make up their minds to cater for the many—and the taste of the many is for showiness rather than solidity. It is happily content with machine-made pattern and books cheaply printed on paper of inferior quality. . . . One fears that the verdict is, So mote it be! but there is something near tragedy in the

thought of Edinburgh—Edinburgh of all places—being bidden to discard her sense of the beauty of craftsmanship. Edinburgh whose citizens achieved an Old Town of 'wildly varied beauty that defies description'; and in a later generation raised a New Town, in dignity and wise proportion! But the old order passes and men must earn their bread—so what use to kick against the pricks!

Two notes before I end this chapter.

The first: I do not know where is the factory, or factories, purveying the innumerable tartan knick-knacks which the Edinburgh shop-window spreads before the eye of the tourist; but, wherever situate, the factory, or factories, must give abundant employment. It is this aspect of the industry I endeavour to dwell on when I pass the many Edinburgh windows all blatant with the tartan souvenir.

And the second: Am I wrong in thinking, when I walk along Princes Street, that I see there more good-looking women and men that I can hope to meet, in a similar space, in other towns of Great Britain?

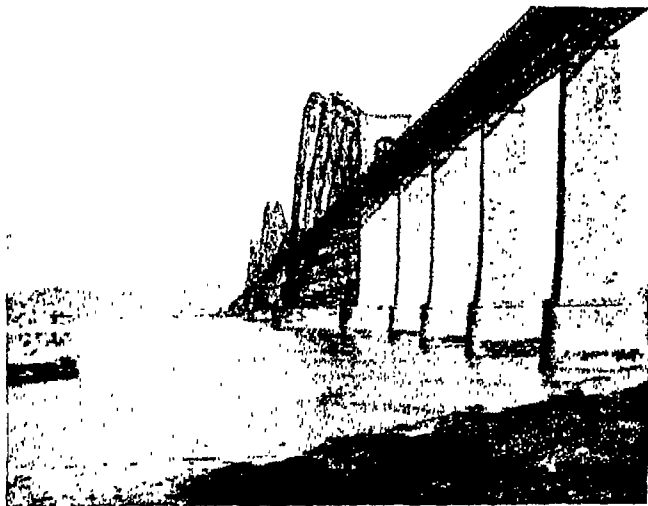
XIV. TAY AND TWEED

DUNDEE, third city of Scotland in point of population, has a good many centuries of storied life behind her but not much in the way of antiquities to show for them; her citizens, in fact, have dealt somewhat drastically with their heritage of bygone architecture. Most of her imposing buildings and the best of her streets are modern—the Doric columns of her fine City Square were completed in the nineteen-twenties—and if the improvements of recent years have swept away ancient picturesqueness as well as hovels, they have resulted in a better-planned town. Also her founders, like those of many Scottish cities, were wise in their selection of a site; she stretches her length, in enviable fashion, on the rising shore of a river more than two miles wide. Southward she looks to the Tay and the coast of Fife; and from Dundee Law, that backs her on the north, to the outlying hills of the Grampians. The railway bridge that spans the Firth of Tay and connects her with Fife has not the magnificence of the cantilever bridge that spans the narrower Forth; but I have never yet visited the city of Dundee that I have not looked towards the Tay after nightfall, what time I knew that a train was about to cross—so that I might watch the golden caterpillar, with its double in the water, glide its way along the curve of the bridge. It is the fact that its course is a curve from shore to shore that adds to the beauty of the golden caterpillar's transit; the better to resist the



TAY BRIDGE

J. B. White, Dundee



FORTH BRIDGE

Scottish Travel Association

force of wind and current, the bridge crosses the Firth as an arc. No doubt of the power of its wrought-iron structure to stand against the fury of wind and water; but the traveller who crosses the Firth in his train will likely remember the tragedy of another bridge that was not strong enough to stand. The first Tay Bridge was built of cast-iron, not of wrought; since it carried only a single track, it was considerably narrower and lighter than the present structure, and it also stood several feet higher. Whether by reason of faulty material used in construction, or whether by reason of faulty design, it had only been completed something over a year when its main spans collapsed in a night of December gale. Since the Firth is wide, and dark had fallen when the breach was made, nothing was guessed of it on either bank—nothing was heard above the wrath of the gale—and an oncoming train, running north to Dundee, had no warning as it sped to destruction. . . . If I do not mistake, one of my first memories of an event that was not part of my own small life was concerned with the story of the Tay Bridge disaster. I remember a child sitting hunched on a hassock, listening while the newspaper account was read out; listening because she could not help it, and yet not wanting to listen, so dreadful was the vision conjured up! And I remember how someone—a signalman probably—saw a shower of sparks as the engine plunged and so guessed at disaster to the train. . . . That was the Tay Bridge tragedy of the 28th December 1879; and it was not until nearly nine years later that the present bridge was completed and the railway ran again across the Firth.

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There was a time when the city was famous for the whaling ships she built and sent out to the Arctic; now, as far as Dundee and her yards are concerned, the whaling industry is a thing of the past and her later reputation has been founded chiefly on the three J's, 'jam, jute, and journalism.' The jam of Dundee is more generally known as her marmalade; as for journalism, the air of the east coast of Scotland is apparently favourable to newspaper achievement, since Aberdeen also has produced her notable journalists. Dundee's output of this influential class of citizen has been of such quality, as well as quantity, that practically every important newspaper in Great Britain is said to have been edited, at one time or another, by a man who had mastered his craft on the banks of the Tay.

The third J—jute—is to-day the town's main industry; but of late, like many other British industries, it has had to compete with the East—the factories of Calcutta, with their supply of raw material close at hand and their workers paid at Asiatic rates. One of the countries that buys jute from Dundee is Russia; whose government, apparently, has taken example by Cromwell's policy of Navigation Laws, since she imports only in her own Russian keels and will not even insure them in an alien office. Jute, it is well known, is predominantly a woman's employment; Dundee is traditionally a city where the wife and mother earns a weekly wage and where, often enough, the husband and father does not. That being the case, it has its special problems—economic problems and social; not likely, one imagines, to be rendered less acute by improvement in machinery or the above-mentioned rivalry of the East. Save for excep-

tional processes, the work of a jute mill is not highly skilled; much of it can be performed as satisfactorily by a boy as by a man receiving the higher wage which Trade Boards have decreed for man's estate. It is inevitable, therefore, in a trade where foreign competition must be faced, that juvenile labour should often take the place of adult; I was told this with regret by one of the employer class whose firm has been endeavouring to keep men at work (and its machines going on a profitable basis) by running a night shift—which, under present factory regulations, means employment of men's labour only. It was the same mill which had put its girl employees into the trousered overalls which are shown in the photograph opposite page 206, for better protection against the risks of machinery. Accidents, I was told, were exceedingly rare and practically impossible without contributory negligence; still, the trouser is a safer garment than the petticoat for those who work in the neighbourhood of moving mechanism; and incidentally most of the girls looked well in it!

Since one of her industries is the making of canvas, and one of her principal customers the Royal Navy, Dundee, like other manufacturing centres, will have little cause to regret a rearmament programme. To the guide who was instructing me in the various processes of a canvas factory, I supposed that the great day of the industry was the good old times of our wooden walls, before the Navy took to steam; and was promptly informed that His Majesty's ships used more canvas nowadays, for subsidiary purposes, than when they spread their sails to the breeze. It sounds incredible, but so I was assured by those in a position to know.

Like other regions of urban Scotland, Dundee is wrestling with her slum problem—which, if not so extensive as Glasgow's, has been in its way as acute. Still in existence are courts into which the sunlight hardly penetrates, courts where five or six families share unpleasant sanitary arrangements; but contrasted with these, and gradually ousting them, are the new streets and suburbs where—at rentals beginning at six shillings odd—the tenant, in addition to his well-built modern flat, will likely enough have a stretch of garden thrown in. The Scot takes as kindly to gardening as he does to marine engineering and I could see for myself that few of the plots were neglected; since a considerable proportion of the tenants must have been slum-born and bred, I wondered how they attained to such skill in the raising of flowers and vegetables. When I put the question to one of the officials of the housing department, he told me that no tenants of the new estates need ever lack instruction in the art and craft of gardening; the old hands who had planted their herbaceous borders or raised their crop of potatoes and beans, were more than willing to act as instructors and direct the neophyte in the gardening way he should go.

In spite of the cheapness and moderate rents of these dwellings, erected at the public expense, they are not always regarded with favour by those for whose benefit they are raised; more than once in the course of a day's inspection we came across instances of that reluctance to quit the familiar slum on which I have commented elsewhere. One family, newly established in what seemed to me a most eligible flat, were frankly disgruntled by its distance from the centre of the town;

a disadvantage which seemed to outweigh a bathroom, good cupboards, and excellent heating arrangements. Then, an hour or two later, I was ushered into a close which had been marked down for destruction by the sanitary authority of the city; it was a narrow passage, so narrow and dark that the tenants of its ground-floor dwellings were seldom able to dispense with artificial light. The shabby block on one side the passage afforded lodging to five separate households, who shared the one and only water-closet situated at the end of the court. My guide, a sanitary official, called first at one of the houses on the ground floor, a two-roomed dwelling inhabited by five persons, a father, mother, and three children. In contrast to other houses in the same block (which in every sense of the word were slums) this particular dwelling was an example of the triumph of good housekeeping over surroundings. The first of the rooms was a kitchen-bedroom-living-room, where cooking was proceeding at the stove; in spite of its multifarious functions, it was nearly as neat as the cabin of a ship—or the dress of its occupants, a good-looking man and his wife. They received us in friendly fashion and took us into the adjoining room which was used only as a bedroom; it contained no fireplace but was heated to a certain extent by the next room stove; still, one of its walls, as the tenants pointed out, was heavily streaked with damp. Though it was high day at the time of our visit, the gas in the living-room was alight; it was always alight, they told us, except now and then on a summer day for a few of the brightest hours. The sanitary official was sympathetic concerning the many and serious deficiencies, and announced

encouragingly that it would not be long before one of the new municipal houses would be available for occupation by the family; whereupon, to my astonishment, there was an immediate outburst of protest on the part both of man and wife. No, no, they insisted, they were all right here, they didn't want to move, they didn't want one of the new houses! The outburst, as I say, astonished me because these people were so clearly self-respecting; it would have been understandable enough in the case of other tenants of the same building whose belongings were comfortably encrusted with the dirt of ages; but here was a family that rose above its dismal surroundings. When asked their objections to the move, the first they advanced was expense; the cheapest of the new houses would cost them over six shillings a week in rent and here they paid something over three. (The rental of the Dundee slums, I noticed, was very low compared with those of Glasgow.) When it was pointed out to them that the consequent reduction in their weekly gas-bill would counterbalance the increase of rent, the objection of distance was instantly raised—raised and stubbornly upheld. For many years now the generality of Londoners have realized that they cannot hope to live in close neighbourhood to their place of employment; but the inhabitants of Dundee—a good many at least—still consider it a hardship to dwell a tram journey from their work. (A brief tram journey, since Dundee would be lost in London—in a corner of London!) The inspector was friendly and persuasive but the couple were firm. Absence of sunlight and decent sanitation, walls where the paper was streaked and patched with damp—these were considered lesser evils



Dundee Courier and Advertiser
GIRL JUTE-WORKERS, DUNDEE

by far than a daily going to and from employment. Fares, no doubt, even inexpensive tram fares, make serious difference to many wage-earning households; but these people (judging by their dress and belongings) were not of the desperately hard-up class; it was only their undesirable dwelling-place that suggested the discomfort of poverty. The woman was the most determined in her opposition to the move; and though the argument was not put forward, I suspected that the monotony of the new suburbs, as compared with her livelier and unhealthier surroundings, had a good deal to do with her limpet-like adherence to her slum. In time, no doubt, many of the migrants become reconciled to the quarters they enter with reluctance; those who take to their gardening must soon become more than reconciled; but in the beginning it may well be a wrench to leave not only an accustomed dwelling-place but accustomed neighbours and old friends.

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Of Scottish housing, in one region or another, I have already discoursed at some length; but before leaving the subject for good and all, there is still one aspect upon which I should like to touch, since it illustrates the difficulty of legislating for multitudes—especially when rules are expected to apply alike to the country and the town. In one of the Border counties I was told (and by those whose duty it was to know) that it would often be impossible, in rural Scotland, to enforce all the provisions of recent housing legislation. By the wisdom of Parliament it has been enacted that housing accommodation, from this time on, must be on a scale which

renders it unnecessary for more than two members of a household to occupy the same bedroom; a provision which, needless to say, will mean an increase in building costs—in some rural districts an almost impossible increase. Cottages intended for the use of agricultural labourers are scattered about and built singly, not contracted for at wholesale rates, and that fact alone must add to the expense of building them; while it must be remembered, further, that the married rural worker, as a general rule, runs to a goodsized family. The farmer nowadays is often hard put to it to make both ends meet, and when it comes to building many-roomed cottages for his ploughman's olive branches, the ends may remain wide apart. This difficulty of the rural districts has been recognized, and one of the suggestions made with a view to overcoming it was that when accommodation was needed on several farms in one neighbourhood, a group of cottages should be erected at some central spot, whence the men, of a morning, could go their ways to their several places of employment. This arrangement, it was said to me, might work quite well in parts of rural England but in rural Scotland it was rendered impossible by one of the usual customs of the Scottish farm. On a Scottish farm it is not customary for any one man to be in charge of the stable; each ploughman is responsible for his own team of horses and must see to their feeding before he takes them out of a morning. That being so, he must live fairly close to the farm stables if he is to feed his horses at the proper time, before he gets his own breakfast; there would be trouble (and rightly) in the farming world if the ploughman were expected, of a winter's morning, to

tramp a there-and-back distance of miles before getting his own bite and sup. The urban legislator would no doubt suggest a general rearrangement of the work of the farm, so that the ploughman could be relieved of his stable duties; but rural custom is a stubborn thing to break, and Scottish ploughmen, my informants assured me, are often fond of their horses and would be reluctant to part from them.

Here it may be noted that there are other respects in which the terms of engagement of the Scottish farm labourer differ from those of the English. North of the Border the custom is to engage a farm worker for a twelvemonth, from May to May; sometimes the engagement is for six months only, but the general rule is the year. The peculiarity of this form of contract is that it terminates itself at the end of the year unless the farmer gives previous notice that he would like to renew it; if nothing has been said by the first week in March, the employee understands he is to go—silence means notice to quit. Trade union opinion is understood to be strongly in favour of the English system where discharge has to be definitely stated, not assumed by an employer's silence.

I have sometimes thought that if I were a dictator, blessed or cursed with unlimited power to rearrange my country's economy and habits, I should try to rearrange it on the lines of the Scottish Border. That is to say, I should try to make of it a country of small towns, with their various markets and industries; set down, with intervening villages, in a district agricultural and

pastoral.¹ In all the country there should be no swollen wens of population: no dwellers in streets who could not, in a walk that could be measured by minutes, leave the regimented works of man behind them—and thereby come in contact with those actualities of life and growth which it is more than possible to lose sight of in the midst of a millionfold community. Hawick, at the last counting, had a population of 17,000; Galashiels of 13,000; Selkirk and Peebles between 5,000 and 6,000; Jedburgh just over 3,000. All these are communities of manageable dimensions which the wise dictator would surely prefer to a Glasgow, a London, or Chicago. The well-being of towns such as these is not merely a matter of their own industries; much of their trade is done with the surrounding countryside, and when it prospers they themselves are prosperous; hence there is no gulf (as there is in large cities) between the interests of town and country population. In Scotland, as elsewhere, the tendency is for the larger towns to increase at the expense of the smaller; but it will be a loss to Scotland—to Scotland as a whole—if the strength and life are drained out of the Border communities. Some of them have been through hard times in the years of depression when there was little call for the produce of their tweed mills; but for tweed, as for other industries, the tide has turned of late.

I was once told by a Scottish acquaintance that, when her husband retired from business, their first idea was to settle in the Border country, a country that both of them delighted in; on second thoughts, however, they

¹ The Border is a sheep-rearing district and in times past suffered its 'Clearances,' though not to the same extent as the Highlands.

decided for a home in another part of Scotland, and the reason she gave for this change of mind was that the Border people were a people to themselves. They were hospitable, yes, and friendly in a sense; but coming from the outside you could never hope to be adopted as one of themselves. Naturally I do not vouch for the correctness of this estimate of Border character and outlook; I merely pass it on as it was given to me; but certain it is that the Border districts are strongly conscious of their own identity—not only as against the rest of the world but locally, as against each other. Their intensity of local patriotism, their pride in local history and legend, is, one must guess, a heritage from the old days of Border clan and sept. In Galashiels, yearly, the town turns out for the pageant of the Braw Lad and Lass, whose festival commemorates the Braw Lads of Gala of centuries ago and their feat of arms against the English; in Hawick there is a similar festival, the Common Riding. Community consciousness of whatever variety—national, local, professional, class—is best encouraged by a dash of the spirit which, in its harmless form, is no more than friendly rivalry, in its harmful the bitterness of hatred. The Border districts owe their strong sense of their own individuality to the fact that they lived, for many generations, in contact with enmity; lived with arms in their hands and a watchful eye on each other, as well as on the English south.

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Washington Irving, when he came to the Border, surveyed its Tweed and its hills with disappointment; being steeped in Walter Scott and the lore of the ballad,

he expected something grander, something more romantic than 'a mere succession of grey waving hills . . . monotonous in their aspect and so destitute of trees that one could almost see a stout fly walking along their profile; and far-famed Tweed appeared a naked stream, flowing between bare hills, without a tree or thicket on its banks.' . . . Washington Irving, coming from America, was accustomed to scenery on a grander scale and these hills of the Border are not mountains; but only the eye of disappointment could see in them nothing but 'grey waving hills.' They take colour from bracken and pasture and heather; and because their contours are curved and rounded they share with the Downs the beauty of the cloud-shadow—never so beautiful as when racing across a smooth hill. As for the accusation of treelessness, that may have been justified a century ago, but (as in other regions of Scotland) there has been much planting since then; to-day there is plentiful timber in the valleys, and fir and larch are growing up many of the hillsides.

Scott is the tutelary genius of the Border and the strange pile he raised for himself at Abbotsford, by Tweed, is a place of pilgrimage for many. Whatever a previous generation may have thought of it, its chief merit, nowadays, is that he owned it and worked there; his worthier monument is the place where he lies buried, at Dryburgh—no lack of trees in the lovely river-bend where stands what is left of the ancient abbey and monastery. It is a mistake to imagine that the Ages of Faith were ages of respect for sacred buildings; Dryburgh was plundered again and again before Hertford ruined it for good in the sixteenth century. . . . On the

north side of the abbey is the grave of Walter Scott, beside it the grave of Douglas Haig—and concerning the latter I venture to utter my protest. It is fitting that Flanders poppies should be placed on the turf beneath which Haig lies buried; but is it necessary to make pretence that these artificial flowers are growing on the grave—and growing from the heads of long black pins? Anything more incongruous than these black pins ranged precisely on the turf, and accentuating the artificiality of the poppies! . . . I hope, if ever I go again to Dryburgh, I shall find this melancholy regiment of pins has been removed in favour of a wreath.

XV. ODDS AND ENDS AND COMMENTS

IN proportion to the number of pupils in Scotland, I should imagine that the number of teachers and schools is high. It may be that teachers in the urban districts have cause to lament, like their English colleagues, the excessive size of the classes they are called on to instruct; but in the sparsely populated districts of the Highlands there are schools which sometimes consist of a few children only—I myself was one day escorted to a building which was occupied by one teacher and two pupils, a boy and a girl. It was explained, certainly, that I had come on an unfortunate day, when only two-thirds of the school-attendance was present; the other third was kept away by some youthful malady. . . . Another school in the same county was entirely a family affair; the children attending it (I think there were four) were the small sons and daughters of a gamekeeper whose house, in the shadow of the Grampians, was miles from the nearest village. All the same, the family had their nice little schoolroom—a well-built outhouse, close to their own door, and equipped with maps and desks. As for the teacher, she lodged and boarded with her pupils' parents—the gamekeeper's dwelling was luckily of comfortable size.

Sometimes, of course, it is possible—and advisable on the score of public economy—to close these diminutive schools and arrange for daily conveyance of the scholars



A HIGHLAND SCHOOLMASTER AND HIS PUPILS; MR. HUGH FRASER, O.B.E., AND SCOURIE SCHOOL
Scholastic Sonnet Company, Blackpool

elsewhere. Often, however, there is strong local feeling on this point; even a hamlet, or collection of two or three farms, will be aggrieved at the idea of parting with its school. As an instance, a proposal to shut down the three-scholar establishment, mentioned above, had been received with hearty disfavour. Local rivalry—which in districts is strong—may have something to do with this preference of the tiny community for its own school; when it no longer provides its own education, it loses in prestige as against the village to which it has to send its children. Incidentally, I was told by a Scottish County Councillor, with whom I once discussed the problem of these small, and therefore expensive, schools, that it was not advisable to close them in too much haste; the numbers might dwindle down to three or four—and then a local farmer might engage a ploughman who arrived with a long string of youngsters!

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There are not, I suppose, many regions of Europe where the growth and development of aerial traffic is likely to have more important effects upon daily life than in the island groups of Scotland. One of the grievances of the Western Isles is their lack of adequate communication with the mainland; and though an air service cannot, at present, supply many trading facilities, it can and does diminish isolation and further tourist traffic to the Hebrides. And the same with the service to Orkney and Shetland, which brings the mainland of Scotland and the other 'Mainland' of Orkney within twenty minutes of each other. By that twenty minutes the traveller, starting from the airport of Thurso, avoids

a crossing of the Pentland Firth which, even when good tempered, is said to have its ups and downs; as for the Pentland Firth in boisterous mood, I am told by one who has many times braved it that you don't know what it is to be seasick until you have tried it in bad weather! . . . The sturdy little boat that makes the daily voyage sails from Scrabster, the fishing-port on Thurso Bay whence Kitchener took ship aboard the *Hampshire*.

Partly by ill-luck and partly by my own bad management—I had lingered too long on the journey to Thurso—I was obliged to turn south again without, as I had hoped, seeing something of the Orkneys and Shetlands; which, unlike the Hebrides, are a flourishing archipelago, prosperous by reason of farming as well as of fisheries. Orkney and Shetland, in time of war, worked up a trade in poultry and eggs which they did not let slip in time of peace. Their communications with the mainland of Scotland are not only by air and the daily steamer to Scrabster; a steamer service runs direct to Wick and Aberdeen.

There is some annual excursion from Orkney to the mainland when large numbers of otherwise home-keeping Orcadians arrive for a summer day in Thurso—and a summer day in Thurso, be it remembered, is a day with little night to speak of. On these outings the usual procedure is for numbers of Orcadians to repair to the railway station, to contemplate the (somewhat infrequent) arrival and departure of trains. Thurso is the terminus of the northern railway system; a very small terminus, served by a few small trains. Some miles away there is a junction where the train from the

south divides itself in twain; one portion—the larger usually—going off to Wick and a couple of carriages continuing their northward way to Thurso. Those who have beheld the Royal Scot or the Atlantic Coast Express would see nothing particularly worthy of note in an engine and two carriages puffing in or out of a minor Scottish station; but to the Orcadian excursionist these arrivals and departures may represent the species of attraction that Baedeker marks with double stars. The average dweller in Orkney is no stranger to the car; there are plenty of drivable roads in his islands and a bus service runs between Kirkwall and Stromness. He is familiar with the mechanism that moves on the waters, from the motor-driven fishing-boat to the battleships and cruisers of the Fleet; he is familiar, also, with the aeroplane, civil and military. The one form of transport that is lacking in his islands is a train; when, therefore, his day of excursion comes round, he hies him to the railway station!

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Historians and antiquarians must decide between themselves as to whether the coast population of Caithness is predominantly Gaelic or Norse—the Nationalist view, which inclines to the Gaelic side, I have given in an earlier chapter. Against it must be set the fact that the place-names of the coast are Norse—Wick, Thurso, Lybster, there is no mistake about their origin; and when I put the question to a local acquaintance he bade me look round and see for myself that the fishermen and farmers of the district were not of the Highland type. (Strange how frequently in Scotland you find

interest in origins and race; how the differences of race are taken for granted, and likewise the importance of those differences! In the Highlands a small boy was once introduced to me as 'the little Celt' of the family; a younger child, said the father, was Norse in type—a heritage from Hebridean ancestry, where the Viking mingled with the Gael!)

If the Act of Union should in time be thrown on the scrap-heap, and a Scottish Parliament sit again in the shadow of St. Giles, it will probably be as well for Scotland if the Celtic strain in her people is less strong than the Nationalist likes to think. For, with all its endowments, the Celtic race has often been lacking in that essential of national comfort and enduring government, the quality that makes men good neighbours, disinclined to carry quarrel too far. Perhaps the real argument for predominance of Celtic blood throughout Scotland is the fact that the history of Scotland independent was a history of almost unceasing feud and conflict. Judging by his record of recent centuries—the continent of Europe gives many examples—the Scottish Gael, like his Irish brother, often does best when he works in partnership with those who are not of his blood; left to himself, he has been apt to quarrel with his kin. The Irish who had vanquished the Danes at Clontarf were promptly set upon by their fellow-Irish; the Macdonalds at Culloden, in face of the enemy, sulked at an insult to their pride. . . . Fine things and high things the Gael has given to the world; he has refused more steadfastly than most of us to worship at the shrine of Mammon; but when it comes to the art and craft of government, he is all the better for mingling with a strain which is

less inclined to internecine feud because less inclined to extremes.

To make a study of the work of modern Scottish authors is to come in frequent contact with a spirit of pessimism; which, like other manifestations of the Scottish temperament, is more intense than our English variety of cheerlessness. One of its products in fiction is Lewis Grassic Gibbon's *Granite City*—a relentless piece of work if ever there was one—another, and more recent, that chronicle of life among Glasgow gangs, entitled *No Mean City*. This type of fiction, dealing as it does with the uglier realities of Scottish urban life, represents the utmost swing of the literary pendulum from that former fiction of the sentimental-rural which was dubbed by the title of *Kailyard*. And because the pendulum is of Scottish origin, it has swung very far in each direction; the urban novels are more starkly realistic, as the *Kailyard* fiction was a thought more sugary, than the corresponding output of the Southron. . . . Nor is it only the outlook of the writer of fiction that is shadowed by pessimism. To take but one or two examples: Edwin Muir's *Scottish Journey* and George Blake's *Heart of Scotland* are the work of men who have surveyed their country, its conditions and prospects, through spectacles anything but rose-coloured.

In part, no doubt, Scottish pessimism, literary and otherwise, is a natural product of post-war disillusion and the long, lean years of industrial depression; and in so far as it is caused by depression, a sufficient return

of industrial prosperity would lighten it. But above and beyond material causes, pessimism with regard to the future of Scotland seems motivated by a fear that finds frequent expression in the work of the moderns and inclines not a few of them to Nationalism; the fear, I mean, that Scotland is losing her individuality, losing the outlook, the Scottish soul and mind, that makes of her children a people. The anglicization of Scottish education and culture and that attraction of the greater community for the less, whereof one of the results is what Edwin Muir calls 'literary depopulation'—these tendencies many of the moderns are endeavouring to stem, some not only by protest, but by endeavours to de-anglicize the language.

As regards literary depopulation, the pull of London is not the only factor responsible; the Scottish reading public is also to blame for the southward trek of so many among Scottish writers. Such at least is the accusation brought against his fellow-countrymen by a Scottish author, Mr. Lewis Spence;¹ its tenor being that the author suffers because the bulk of his readers are provincial in their tastes and interests; 'they much prefer to read about the slow tides of life in quiet Drumtochty, and the sands of the Western Isles are remote enough for them to be going on with.' Thanks to this limitation of outlook, they lack interest in some of the types of fiction that have a strong appeal to English readers; they reckon little of adventures in distant regions of the world—works dealing with the African jungle or the gorgeous East are not as a rule in much demand. The majority of the Scottish public have

¹ In the *Scottish Educational Journal* for June 19, 1936.

homekeeping wits and insist on like outlook in those who supply them with their reading matter. But, as Mr. Lewis Spence puts it, 'How many writers with an exclusively Scottish reputation can contrive to exist on the very slender rewards accruing to such endeavours?' The answer, apparently, is that it cannot be done; unless, that is to say, the author puts aside the hope of swollen royalties and makes up his mind to exist with extreme moderation. Scotland is a country of under five million inhabitants and, if they have no more than a local appeal, even its best sellers will not often make a novelist's fortune.

Mr. Spence cites witnesses—numerous witnesses, as well as notable—in support of his plaint against the Scottish reader. Some of those he cites are among the great names of the past. 'The comparative failure of James Thomson, of *Seasons* fame, to catch the ears of his fellow-Scots is probably to be explained because of his invariable adherence to alien themes, and the same may be said of William Drummond of Hawthornden, who has always enjoyed a much larger hearing in England than among ourselves. It certainly accounts, too, for the relative failure of Scott to attract attention in Scotland for such novels as *Anne of Geierstein* and *The Betrothed*, in which his romantic genius shone every whit as brightly as in those of a more strictly native character.' These instances, drawn from the past, show that provincialism in reading taste is a traditional characteristic of the Scottish public; nor (according to Mr. Spence) is there any present sign of its weakening. With a few notable exceptions, he says, 'Articles which do not in some manner deal with native life and character

have small chance of acceptance in Scottish newspapers and magazines'—and the editors of newspapers and magazines, with a watchful eye upon circulation, are doubtless well aware of the likes and dislikes of their public.

This sturdy preference for local colour means that Scottish authors who are ambitious of success that is more than esteem must usually cultivate an English as well as a Scottish public. Here Mr. Spence instances Sir James Barrie, who 'has judiciously divided his favours between Scots and English playgoers,' while 'among the moderns Dr. Cronin and Mr. Linklater have also seen fit to write alternatively on Scots and English themes.' Mr. Spence goes on to stress the significant fact that Lewis Grassie Gibbon gained no recognition from his countrymen for his earlier works, which did not deal with Scotland; it was not until he launched into Scottish fiction that he became a power in the land. Obviously the earnings of an author who deals with Scotland are frequently added to by other than Scots; the English public, whatever its failings, is less narrowly provincial in its tastes, and far more willing to read about the Scot than the Scot is to read about the Englishman. Still, there is a limit to English requirements in the way of Caledonian fiction; hence it follows that the Scottish author who confines himself to the subjects his countrymen demand of him 'can scarcely hope to earn enough by the exercise of his craft to ensure him a decent livelihood. . . . On the other hand, if he should seek to cater exclusively for the English and American markets, he must cut himself adrift from those subjects with which he is naturally best acquainted. . . . In a

word, he must pass sentence of literary banishment upon himself.'

In this complaint of a Scot of to-day there is, no doubt, much of justification; the refusal of his reading countrymen to take interest in alien men and manners is, and must be, hard on the writer who does take interest, as well as on the man who has to think of his bread when he sits him down with a pen; but the fact remains that, spite of this handicap, Scottish literature of the twentieth century has produced its many names of note. For, desirable as it is, from the author's point of view, that his work should sell by its tens of thousands and his royalty accounts be a pleasure to contemplate; yet true it is that the best in literature, like the best in art and science, has no relation to the price that its buyer pays for it—the 'real thing,' wherever found, does not respond to the money bribe. Those who, in any department of life, deliver the 'real thing' must receive a wage that enables them to live and produce their work; but the particular quality in that work which raises it above the ordinary and makes it creative is unpayable in terms of cash; the creative impulse cannot be bargained for and laid on the counter in return for a price—however generous the offer. Even if it were the case that the sales of an author who deals with Scottish themes were entirely confined to Scotland, that fact would necessitate no deterioration of Scottish literature; in all branches of art, some of the best that the world has known has been produced for the benefit of small communities, sometimes of very small communities. In the city states of Greece, as in their counterparts of medieval and renaissance Italy, inhabitants were counted by the thousand

and not by the million; the smallness of his public did not quench the fire of Dante or discourage the genius of Donatello or of Pheidias. In Tudor England, for whom Shakespeare wrote, the entire population would not have been crowded in the half of our London of to-day; and the Germany of poet, musician, and philosopher was the old divided Germany of many separate states and provinces. While as good an example as any comes from Scotland herself; the Gaelic music that is one of the chiefest treasures of her heritage—that music came into being in glens and islands, out of touch with the world, and was sung and played to no more than an audience of neighbours. Art that is real will, as time goes on, make itself known to a wider world than that in which it was created; but it has its beginnings in its own place—the art that sets out to appeal to the world is the art mechanical of Hollywood. Some day, perhaps, an internationally-minded author will write of the world in general and the mass of humanity as William Power and Neil Munro have written of their country and her men; some day, perhaps, but not yet. . . . It may be that the reading public of Scotland is over-narrow, over provincial, in its outlook; but in the interests of literature it is probably better that its outlook should be too narrow than too wide.

And if it be as general as Mr. Spence asserts, is not this narrowness of outlook, this concentration on that which is Scottish, and comparative indifference to the outside world—is not that, in itself, a convincing proof that much of the pessimism concerning the denationalization of Scotland is unfounded? 'Almost every influence, political and economic, seems to forbid Scotland's

survival,' sighs Mr. Colin Walkinshaw; meaning, of course, the survival of Scotland as more than a geographical unit, as a nation with its own tradition and manner of life. But with all deference to the literary moderns of Scotland (who know their country far better than I do) I find it hard to believe that a people which is so eagerly interested in itself and its country that it will read about them from year's end to year's end—I find it hard to believe that a people so conscious of its own life is in any danger of losing its racial identity! . . . And since uniformity has always been a deadening influence, and humanity has best been served by diversity of gifts, that is a conclusion which affords me almost as much satisfaction as if I had been born a Scot!

NOTES

NOTES

Note A. Religion and Gang Fights

'QUESTIONS about Glasgow gang fights and their supposed religious provocation were asked yesterday by Lord Aitchison, the Lord Justice Clerk, during a murder trial at Glasgow High Court.

'Two gangs mentioned were known as the Billy Boys and the Savoy Arcadians.

'William J. McSwiggan, a youth living in the East End of Glasgow, said that he went about with the Arcadians. The four men, Daniel McGuinness, Richard McGuinness, James Farrell, and Robert Longmuir, who are alleged to have murdered George Stankovitch, were all members of the Arcadians.

'Lord Aitchison asked McSwiggan: "You band yourselves together for gang purposes?"

"We stand about at the same corner of the street," replied McSwiggan.

'Why are you banded together if you are not a gang?—I do not know.

'Do not the Billy Boys and the Savoy Arcadians threaten each other with violence?—Not every time they see each other.

'Do not fights go on between the two gangs?—Yes.

'What are the fights about?—Religion.

'Is that your idea of religion?—Yes.'

From the *Daily Telegraph*, December 16, 1936.

Note B. Nationalist Symbols

While this book was in the making there disappeared from Stirling the sword which tradition asserts to have belonged to William Wallace. The tradition is said to be of doubtful authenticity; but if, as is thought, the abductors of the weapon were Nationalists, they, presumably, believed wholeheartedly in the genuineness of their relic. It may be that before these words are in print the sword will have emerged from its present hiding to figure in a patriotic demonstration, on the Field of Bannockburn or other appropriate spot; or it may be that the symbol of Scotland's past independence is being treasured in secret by the faithful till the day of independence dawns again.

A symbol yet more important in the eyes of Scottish Nationalism is the Stone of Scone of which Edward 'Hammer of the Scots' took possession in the year 1296 and removed to Westminster Abbey, where to this day it is 'inset' in the Coronation Chair. As the kings of Scotland are now crowned at Westminster, there seems quite a case for its present location; that, however, is not the view of extremer spirits of the Nationalist Party, and it has now been revealed by the Dean of Westminster that a year or two ago there was actually a plot, 'known to the police, but to few others,' to take forcible possession of the sacred Stone and carry it back to Scotland. Thirteen persons were said to be implicated in the plot; it came to nothing because, news of it having reached the police, the necessary precautions were taken. The point of view of those who reclaim the Stone for Scotland has been put by the Hon. Ruairaidh Erskine of Marr in *The Crown of England*.

'The English when they crown their kings are used to seat them on the famous Stone of Scone, which centuries ago they took in warfare from the Scots, but have since failed to return to them, though they obliged themselves by treaty to do so. . . .

It would be a graceful and a thankful gesture on the part of the English in regard to their neighbours of Scotland, if (somewhat belated though the restoration should seem) they were to send back the Stone the road it came to them centuries ago, more especially since the English, who are always very forward to insist that other peoples should discharge with all due exactness and care their treaty obligations, should themselves be as forward at least to set the others a good example in this respect.'

Treaty-breaking was almost as frequent in the Middle Ages as it is in our own day, and was indulged in by more than the English; who, if they chose to rout about in history, could produce examples even of Scottish bad faith. But against such counter-accusation from the south Mr. Ruaraidh Erskine of Marr and his colleagues may consider themselves fairly safe; *it is not in the Englishman to attach real importance to the grievances of ancestors who fought in nodding plumes and plate armour.* If and when a large section of the Scottish people attaches real importance to possession of the Stone on which their ancient kings took the oath prescribed by custom, I imagine they will get it back—and that the Southron will arrive, by car and by train, to witness the ceremony of restoration and listen, without turning as much as a hair, to denunciation of his forebears. . . . Meanwhile, though the Stone may remain at Westminster, England, by the time these words are in print, will in all probability have gratified nationalist sentiment by returning to Scotland certain other borrowings made by the first of her Edwards. The documents, that is to say, which were handed over for Edward's inspection and enlightenment when, after the death of the Maid of Norway, he was called in to adjudicate between rival claimants to the Scottish throne. Inspection made, the documents should have been returned—such, at least, is the Scottish claim. Instead, by design or mere forgetfulness, they have remained amongst the records of England's past for a matter of six centuries and a half.

Note C. Scottish Migration to England

At Corby, some seventy miles north of London, there is at the present moment a Scottish colony of several thousand workmen and their families who have recently migrated to the English Midlands from the industrial area of Clydeside; following their employment in the steel and iron works of a well-known Scottish firm which has transferred its interests to Northamptonshire. An appeal issued in 1936 by the Scottish Church in London, with the object of providing the colony with its own place of worship, states that 'during the past two years the quiet village of Corby in Northamptonshire has been transformed into a busy township of some 10,000 people. . . . The development of this romance of industry affords a unique and striking example of Scottish colonization, involving the evacuation from the "Distressed Areas" of Lanarkshire of thousands of our countrymen with their families.' . . . The authors of the appeal add that the colony is steadily growing and that the 'new work to which they are adapting themselves is a boon after tragic unemployment.'

Note D. Languages of Scotland

When, in the latter half of the sixth century, Columba arrived from Ireland on his work of conversion, he needed an interpreter when it came to dealing with the Picts; a race whose origins, I believe, are still matter for dispute among the learned, but of whom it is known that their native dialects were not ousted by the Gaelic until after the lifetime of Columba. In his day, the stronghold of Gaelic in Scotland was Dalriada, a region corresponding to the modern Argyllshire, which had been settled by Scots—who were Irish! As it spread, the 'British' languages lost ground and, in the end,

disappeared; disappearing also in the south-east before the onslaught of English. English and the British dialects, however, were not the only opponents of the Gaelic; following Viking conquests and settlement, Norse, for several generations, was spoken in large tracts of Scotland; in Orkney and Shetland and the Western Isles; on the coasts of Caithness, Sutherland, and the West, as far down as the Firth of Clyde and even, in patches, farther south. And by the time that Gaelic had established its dominance in the north, a form of English had established itself as the dominant speech of the Lowlands.

Note E. Scots and Irish

The Scots, to Latin writers of the early Christian era, were the Irish Gaels, and it was through Gaelic migration from Ireland to Argyll that the name began to spread in Scotland. Argyll means the country of the Eastern Gaels; and in its beginnings the Irish colony formed part, the eastern part, of the kingdom of Dalriada—the other part being in northern Ireland, in what now is the county of Antrim. As time went on, the part became the whole; it was the northern offshoot, not the main Irish stem, to which the Latin name of Scotia was applied. To the Gaels themselves their country was Albyn; its title of Scotland came from the English-speaking Lowlands. (Vienna, by the by, bears witness to the Irish origin of the Scots name and title; her *Schottenring* has no connection with our Scotland; it commemorates a settlement of missionary monks from Ireland.) The common use of Scotia by two countries had its disadvantages—and still has, to a certain extent, for the historian. Duns Scotus, for instance, may have been a Scot, though the strong probability is that he was Irish. More serious consequences were disputes in the Middle Ages between Scottish and Irish religious

communities, with regard to the ownership of monastic property on the Continent—the former have been known to oust the latter on production of documentary evidence that the original grant was to ‘Scots.’

Note F. Heritable Jurisdiction

With the Highland dress, right of bearing arms and system of clanship, went also the Highland method of administering justice—what was known as the Heritable Jurisdiction. Owing to the remoteness of many of the mountainous districts, and the consequent difficulty of making the king’s writ run, the Scottish Crown, in the ages of turbulence, had been practically obliged to delegate its powers and functions to men on the spot who were able to make their authority respected by the turbulent; these delegates, as a rule, though not always, being heads of clans. In process of time this authority became hereditary; as hereditary sheriffs and Lords of Regality, landowners administered their own justice on their own estates; one great family, the Campbells of Argyll, were possessed of a hereditary High Justiciary, enabling them to try ‘all common matters high or low of which the High Court of Justiciary at Edinburgh can judge without being subject to the control of that court or to any other control whatever save the pardon which the Crown may grant to criminals condemned.’ As the local dignitary who inherited the office of justiciary or sheriff would seldom, if ever, have a knowledge of the law, the custom grew up of dividing the duties of the office into legal and non-legal; the non-legal being carried out by the hereditary office bearer, who appointed a deputy to be responsible for his legal functions. In connection with such a system of local, irresponsible justice, abuses were inevitable—on occasion the sheriffs did a profitable trade by selling their prisoners to the Plantations; though the fact that, in

some quarters at least, the disappearance of 'gentlemen's law' was regretted shows that some of the hereditary sheriffs must have exercised their privilege with common sense and kindness. By an Act of 1748 their courts were closed and they themselves were one and all replaced by Crown officials; compensation being thereupon demanded by no less than 160 magnates in various parts of Scotland who had been bereft of their heritable privilege. The amount they claimed was well over £500,000—in those days a formidable sum; but, when it came to payment, the amount they received was not much over £150,000.

Note G. The Jacobite Clans

The dead laid in the graves of Culloden do not represent all the Highland clans; the chiefs were by no means unanimous in support of the Stewart cause, and at first it was only Macdonalds of Keppoch and Camerons who rallied to Prince Charlie's standard. The Duke of Argyll, head of the great clan Campbell, was traditionally Whig and therefore loyal to the House of Hanover, and there were others who took no hand in the Rebellion and even took arms against it. Eighteen 'Independent Companies,' each company consisting of 100 men, were raised in the northern Highlands by the Lord President, Duncan Forbes of Culloden, as irregulars serving on the Hanoverian side; the clans from which they were recruited being the Munros, Sutherlands, Grants, Mackays, MacLeods, Macdonalds of Sleat, Mackenzies, and Rosses. Evidence of the strength of the Forty-Five tradition is not only the fact that it is matter of pride in the Highlands if you had an ancestor who fought at Culloden, but the other, and complementary, fact that it is sometimes a matter of regret that your ancestors did not follow Prince Charlie and were wise enough to take the winning side.

Note H. The Patronage Act

The Patronage Act, passed in 1712, ran counter to the democratic usage of the Church of Scotland by giving to the landed interest the right to present ministers to the parish churches. At first the rights of the patron were limited; before a minister could enter on his charge, he had, in addition to his patron's nomination, to receive a Call from his people, but not many years after the Act was passed, the Call had ceased to be necessary—the patron's nomination sufficed. The eighteenth century, in many parts of the world, was an age of religious indifference and slackening of discipline; a slackening which seems for a time to have affected the governing body of the Church of Scotland, since it upheld the patron as against the congregation. Many congregations, however, were less pliable than their governing body; there were numerous cases of resentment at the imposition of unwanted ministers; in one case the presentee to a living was kidnapped and held captive until he had promised to leave the district; in another, a presentee was ordained with a detachment of soldiers standing by; it is not perhaps surprising that although he held his living for many years he never succeeded in attaining a congregation. So strong and so widespread was the discontent that it brought about considerable secession from the Church of Scotland. Though abuses such as those above recounted were probably rare, still the old right of the people to call their ministers was legally in abeyance; and it was round this right, and the degree and manner of its restoration, that there was waged the controversy that culminated, in 1843, in disruption and the founding of the Free Church.

Note I. The Wee Frees

The union of Free Church and Church of Scotland had been preceded by another union—that of the Free Church

with the United Presbyterian. This latter was another 'dissenting' body, deriving from an earlier revolt against Patronage and, by the end of last century, it was felt that the views and needs of the two Churches were sufficiently alike to justify their incorporation in one body. All the same—since matters of doctrine had to be thrashed out—it took three long years of negotiation before union was definitely decided on, in 1900; in that year the Free Church Assembly and the United Presbyterian Synod each passed the motion for union. By the Synod it was passed unanimously; in the Assembly, on the other hand, there was a small minority—25 against 643—a minority more formidable than its numbers would indicate and destined to go down to history under the name of Wee Frees. The ceremony of union took place in October, 1900, in much the same fashion as the later union with the Church of Scotland; the two bodies of ministers meeting at the foot of the Mound and entering a common Assembly Hall. That, however, was not the end of the chapter; the dissenting twenty-five ministers had declared themselves the real Assembly of the Free Church—the majority, they insisted, had withdrawn from it and compromised alike on their Church's principles and creed. Accordingly these Wee Frees brought a lawsuit against the 'seceding' majority, claiming all the property of the Free Church for themselves as the only faithful remnant; claiming, that is to say, for their minute association the possession and ownership of about a thousand churches, with accompanying mansees, and some ten million pounds' worth of other property. The Wee Frees lost their case in the Scottish Courts but carried an appeal to the House of Lords—which, in the year 1904, pronounced a verdict in their favour. It was a decision that staggered all Scotland, that is sometimes advanced as an example of the ignorance of English judges concerning Scottish conditions and ecclesiastical history and therefore an argument in favour of Nationalism. Be that as it may, the decision was given;

but whether or no it was justified from the legal point of view, it proved quite impossible to carry out. The Wee Free minority was legally entitled to take possession of the defeated majority's thousand churches, manses, etc., but taking possession was one thing and running the thousand churches, manses, etc., quite another. The Free Church organization was too great for their scanty numbers to manage and Parliament had to step in and deal with an impossible position. As the Wee Frees were 'unable adequately to execute the Trust of all the endowments,' an Act of Parliament of 1905 restored to the majority all the Church property of which the minority were unable to make profitable use.

Note J. The Limits of Food Supply

'Many people, as they watch the scenes of desolation in the wheat belt (of the United States), which had always been looked upon as an inexhaustible granary, feel that Nature is taking her revenge for the years of abuse she has suffered at the hands of her exploiters. When the first settlers pushed from the east into what are now the West North-Central States . . . they found a plain stretching for hundreds of miles in all directions, grassland awaiting only the cattle to become one of the greatest stock-raising areas in the world. Other parts of the country were covered with forests through which ran many rivers.

'At first the pioneers did little to disturb the balance of nature. But as the population of Europe and the United States increased and standards of living rose, the Middle-Western farmer set himself to meet the insistent demands for wheat. Millions of acres were ploughed and put to wheat, millions of acres of forest cleared and levelled. . . . The market for wheat increased and the land was exploited more and more, especially during and immediately after the War.

'The tractor and the reaper were paving the way for a devastating vengeance of nature. The soil, after producing bumper crops for many years, began to dry up, deprived of the grass which had formerly kept it open and absorbent. The clearing of the forest . . . laid ground hitherto protected by vegetation open to the full effects of the weather. Soil was washed away by the stream which once had nourished it . . . rivers were silted and many became mere brooks. Even those regions which had been allowed to retain their original character as pasturelands did not escape unscathed. The size of the herds did not decrease in proportion and the remaining pasture was overgrazed, becoming barren and worthless in many States. . . . In recent years it has been brought home to many Americans that much of the United States may become little better than a desert. . . . It is estimated that 100,000,000 acres of excellent land may never be cultivated again (that is to say, a stretch of country more than twice the size of England and Wales). The great winds which sweep the plains have removed the rich topsoil for a further 169,000,000 acres, which are now covered with a fine dust that was once fertile earth. Another 789,000,000 acres have lost some of their topsoil and may soon lose it all. . . .'—*The Times*, July 31, 1936.

The possibility of driving Nature too hard by progressive methods is not confined to the surface of the land; the state of inshore fishing on British coasts suggests that it is also possible to overdrive her beneath the surface of the sea.

